

THE Harbinger of Light.

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DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

3659 "Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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ON Sunday next the Victorian Association of Spiritualists recommence their public work, having changed their platform to the elegant but somewhat less commodious "Bijou" Theatre (late Academy of Music). Mr. William Denton, their first lecturer in the new campaign they are about entering upon, has already established his local reputation as a speaker on scientific subjects; but next Sunday's lecture will be his first in this colony on the still higher subject of religion, to which true science leads the way. Those who have read Mr. Denton's published works on Spiritualism and free religious thought will have no doubt that in him the advanced Freethinkers and Rational Spiritualists will have, not only a competent exponent of their philosophy, but one capable at the same time of teaching them and expanding their conceptions in many directions.

Spiritualism is the result of a great mind movement, the outreaching and upsoaring of the interior man towards the realm of causes. For ages past, man has sought to get beyond the limited range of his physical senses, and here and there has found a path, but usually so narrow that few beside himself could follow it. The mind movement to which we refer has brought the most civilised nations nearer to the spirit-world; and the combined action of many scientific and aspiring men has opened a broad and well defined road up to its boundaries. This road, however, is but dimly lighted, and although the pioneers who have travelled it are sufficiently familiar with the track to avoid the many rocks and boulders that impede the way, the inexperienced traveller is retarded in his course, and often turns back in despair under the impression that the obstructions are insurmountable.

It is the duty of Spiritualists to light this road, and to demonstrate to their less favoured brethren that there is a thoroughfare right up to the boundary; and through the many avenues leading from the other side come evidences of spirit-life even to the physical senses and ordinary reasoning faculties of those who will travel the paths and occupy the positions necessary to observe them. The leading members of the Victorian Association may be likened to street lamps on the road, shewing a steady, reliable light, so far as they are capable but in William Denton we have an electric light who for the time being will illumine the whole distance and prove to those who are looking that there is a road which even in its dimly lighted state is practicable to the intelligent and persevering. Thousands pass to and fro in close proximity to this road, all unconscious of its existence; many there are whose attention is called to it, who from preconceived notions assume it to be a downward rather than an upward path, and consequently fear to travel it. If sufficient light were shewn, their fears would be dissipated, and its true direction being apparent, such as were aspiring enough would be induced to climb its heights. Whilst the most thoughtful and scientific minds are doing all they can to lighten the road and clear away obstructions from the path of those who are disposed to enter it, it is lamentable to observe a very considerable number of well disposed but less reflective Spiritualists dragging unwilling individuals into its avenues with the view of forcing conviction on them regardless of the fact that even if they do succeed in satisfying them that there is a road they will not avail themselves of it. Were the energy wasted in this direction more wisely expended it would materially aid those who, fit and ready for the journey, only want to be put on the way and shewn the finger-posts.

The mission of Spiritualism is not to proselytise or convert people to a belief in Spiritual intercourse alone; it is more particularly to enlighten; it is of less importance to convince a man of a fact than to raise his moral tone; it is of little consequence what a man believes provided he acts harmoniously, and Spiritualism is only of value in so far as it acts as a lever or motor to raise man higher in morals and religious philosophy. Orderly Spiritualism invariably has this tendency,

whilst disorderly or unwise dabbling in, or pursuit of so serious and important a subject naturally has an inverse one; hence the utility of a combination of experienced minds which the Association aims to maintain, utilising their combined intelligence for the dissemination by every available means of the knowledge they have been enabled to gain on the relationship existing between this material world and the more permanent world of spirits towards which we are all rapidly travelling.

THE RELIGION OF TRUTH.

PART V.

By H. J. BROWNE.

Whilst the value of all religions depends on the belief in immortality, man's continued existence can alone be demonstrated through Spiritualism, which points out that immortality is the birthright of all humanity, consequently, is not conditional, as some men "not knowing the truth" erroneously assert. Though for many centuries past the priests and their dupes have done their best to shut out the light of spiritual truth, communion between the two worlds has never been closed, for in the literature of all nations innumerable instances are recorded of those who had passed through the change called death appearing, communicating, and being recognised as the spirits of certain men and women who had formerly dwelt on earth, in the same way as the spirit of Samuel and the spirits of Moses, Elias, and others are recorded in the Bible as having appeared and been recognised.

From the numerous and incontrovertible evidences of the identity of spirit-friends with whom, during the last eight years, I have held frequent communion, I am as fully convinced of their identity as I am of that of the people with whom I am acquainted in this life. I may here remark I have no object to gain by deceiving myself or other people, and it would afford me the greatest of pleasure to give similar proofs to others did it lie in my power to do so; unfortunately it does not. Mediumship, which is a natural gift, like that of the poet or painter, is of a very varied character, and the spiritual gifts which I possess do not lie in this direction. I may also state that under the most trying of circumstances, viz., at times when loved ones have passed to the inner-life, I have tested the relative values of the popular religion, which is based simply on faith or belief, and of true religion, which is founded on facts, observation, and knowledge, with the following results: Whilst the former failed in the hour of trial to afford me the consolation which it professed to give, the latter, though it could not reanimate the physical bodies of the loved ones, afforded me unquestionable proof of their continued existence and presence in spirit-form, also of their undying love and affection, thereby truly robbing death of its sting and the grave of its victory. "A chain is no stronger than its weakest link," and this is one of the weakest points of a religion that is based on mere faith.

I've tried them both, I know what's best;
Give me the Truth, take all the rest.

It is not to be wondered at, however, that modern Spiritualism has been ridiculed by some, denounced by others, and rejected by many, when it is considered how much it has been traded upon by impostors professing to be its supporters, and how greatly it has been misrepresented and traduced by its opponents, who have judged of it, not by the evidences which it supplies or the glorious truths which it has brought to light, but by the absurdities and falsities which have been mixed up with it. Like everything else in nature Spiritualism (whether ancient or modern) is of a dual character; it has its bright and it has its dark side; it has its truths and it has its falsities. As we do not cast aside the rose because it has thorns, neither should we ignore Spiritu-

alism because it has its dark side, but rather let us choose the good and reject the bad, whether communicated in ancient or in modern times. Let us prove all things, only holding fast that which is true and good.

The many distinguished literary and scientific men who have declared in favour of Spiritualism have, almost without exception, entered upon its investigation with no other object than to expose it, believing it to be a gross delusion, and the result has been that all who have earnestly and perseveringly investigated it have been obliged to admit its truth and reality. It should be borne in mind that they have done this, not in superstitious and credulous times, but in an age of practical observation and inductive reasoning. It is possible that a few, who have only casually investigated the subject under unfavourable circumstances, or without a knowledge of the necessary conditions, may have failed, as might be expected, to obtain satisfactory results; but, as far as I am aware, no one of any repute who has thoroughly investigated it has failed to be convinced of its reality.

Spiritualism is the scientific basis of true religion. Unlike all religions that are founded on mere belief, true religion courts inquiry and challenges investigation. It requires no faith in anything that is contrary to reason. It is not, as is generally supposed, a new religion, but simply a higher dispensation of the same truths that appealed to the most ancient nations of the earth. It endorses what is true and good in all other religions, and, in place of the too frequent "stand aside, I am holier than thou," and of the prevailing selfishness and indifference to the happiness of others, it inculcates the higher law of hope for all, and of brotherly love, not in name only, but in truth. It teaches nobler and truer views of life and being, and substitutes conviction for surmise and knowledge for belief. It raises the question "If a man die shall he live again?" from the region of hypothesis into that of absolute fact. It transforms the fear of death into the prospect of a joyous reunion with the loved ones gone before, with the knowledge that we can return to the dear friends left on earth. In fact, Spiritualism is the arch on which all belief in a future state rests! Take it away and man becomes an aimless object, tossed about on a sea of trouble and confusion, without a haven to steer for, or even a harbour in which to take refuge from the storms and trials of life. Despised and rejected as it is at present, however, it is yet destined to be the spiritual enlightener of mankind. It will reinstate the simple religion of love and good works as taught by all the great spiritual teachers of the past, and thereby bring universal peace and happiness eventually upon earth. As the Rev. J. B. Dodds truly observes: "We live emphatically in an age of investigation and improvement, when light seems to be pouring in oceans on our world; and he who shuts his eyes and then scoffs and sneers because others open theirs and see, is not only recreant to duty, but does society an irreparable wrong."

"The Astronomer, with patient, searching gaze
Doth with his tube the depths of space explore;
Shows Neptune's orb, or, beneath the solar blaze,
Reveals a world by man unseen before.
Justly the world rewards his arduous toil,
And claims to share the glory of his fame;
Beyond the boundaries of his native soil,
From land to land the breezes bear his name.
But he who doth a spirit-world reveal,
Not far in space, but near to every soul,
Which nought but mists of sense and sin conceal,
(Would from man's sight those mists at length might roll!)
He is with incredulity received,
Or with a slow, reluctant faith believed."

To those who have made Spiritual or Psychological science their study, and who like myself have clairvoyantly seen the spirit-world and a number of its inhabitants and have also been for years past in intimate communion with many who have passed through the change called death, it is truly painful to listen to men, who profess to be the people's spiritual teachers, speaking on subjects of which they have no more real knowledge than savages have of Euclid, and with the utmost solemnity theorising on matters the realities of which are as well known to the spiritual scientist as are those of everyday life. It is also pitiable to hear them quoting, in all

seriousness, the erroneous speculations and false hypotheses propounded by philosophers in the past regarding matters the facts of which are now quite familiar to all earnest students of Spiritual science, evidence of the phenomena of which, as stated by Bishop Wilberforce at the late Church of England Congress, lie within the reach of all who will devote the time and take the trouble to investigate for themselves. Many of those popular and reverend Agnostics whose knowledge of Biblical lore and Ecclesiastical history is so greatly admired by their deluded followers, stand in much the same position as did the ancient sages of Greece, who were considered wise until succeeding generations found out they were fools. Totally devoid of spiritual knowledge, and taking undue advantage of the false position which they occupy, they pander to popular prejudices and cunningly hoodwink their too confiding supporters by commingling charitable and philanthropic works with the false and pernicious dogmas which they inculcate. For interested purposes these spiritual "know-nothings" thus perpetuate erroneous and degrading conceptions of God and man's destiny, and from similar motives they, at the same time, inveigh against and audaciously misrepresent that through which alone man's continued existence and the everlasting and impartial love of God can be demonstrated. Most of these reverend charlatans (who are nevertheless infinitely superior to the false conceptions of Deity, they venerate), do not even possess any proof or reliable evidence that there is another life; far less do they know what are its conditions, its employments, or the relations which this life bears to it. A few of them are, however, aware of the truth and reality of Modern Spiritualism; but from their having forsworn their consciences to the Articles of their respective Churches, and for the sake of temporal benefits they quietly ignore it and cleave to the mammon of unrighteousness, rejecting "the true riches," on the principle that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." Others err, not knowing the truth or the love of God. Let me entreat the latter class to follow the noble example of the Boreans commended by Paul; let them search if these things are not as herein represented; let them emulate the manly example of these Boreans with reference to spiritual truths; being slow to judge, not hasty to condemn, taking nothing for granted, nothing upon credit; searching all things, proving all things; trying the spirits; and holding fast only to that which is good. If they will do this they will in time be able to join with the poet in singing,

"No more shall bigotry enshroud
Our dearest hopes in endless terror,
For light, long hid behind the clouds,
Breaks o'er the gloom of ancient error."

No wonder that the world is still "steeped in wickedness and sin," since people have from childhood played the fool in regard to religion, through those men, whom they have looked up to as their spiritual teachers, having all along burlesqued and travestied the holy truth, and who, whilst professing to be the people's friends are in reality their enemies. Imagine what the feelings of these men who have made a trade of religion must be when they awake in the inner-life and discover the fact, as they all must sooner or later do, that they have spent the greater part of their lives on earth in disseminating falsehood in regard to religion, owing to their having persistently ignored the divine faculty of reason—the voice of God within. What a retrospect! What a fearful sense of shame and humiliation awaits them when they meet in the inner-life any of their confiding flocks who have awakened to the falsity of their religious views and have become aware of how they have been misled and imposed upon when upon earth by those whom they so foolishly reposed confidence in as their spiritual teachers! Well may, then, all such reverend impostors call upon the hills to fall upon them, in order to hide their shame and put an end to their agony of remorse.

I may write or speak plainly on this subject, but in all brotherly love let me say to those who, in ignorance of the eternal truth, are thus deceiving themselves and

misleading others: "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways" ere death overtake you and land you in eternity with a lie upon your lips. I am only one out of numbers who have escaped from this wilderness of error, and who are calling, "Prepare ye the way" for the truth; make straight your crooked paths, for a day of reckoning is drawing nigh for all. Continue not to deceive yourselves, for ye shall surely reap as ye have sown, irrespective of that blind faith or culpable credulity on which you now so foolishly rely for salvation from the eternal law of effect following cause.

Many of these spiritual deceivers of themselves and others virtually say to their confiding dupes: "Do not listen to, or have anything to do with Spiritualists or Spiritualism, lest you thereby be led to a knowledge of the truth, and consequently become aware of the falsities which we in all solemnity preach to you as divine verities, and at some of which, at times, your moral consciousness even now revolts." From their "Coward castles" the pulpit, (the right of reply in churches being legally barred), they frequently have the dishonesty to quote from the writings of some spiritual renegade, and therefrom they audaciously denounce Spiritualism as being immoral and devilish. I would like to ask those who thus knowingly misrepresent Spiritualism by imputing immorality to its teachings, "Is it at all likely that our mothers and our sisters who have passed to the higher life would return to instigate to immoral actions those whom they in all purity loved when upon earth?" The utter unreasonableness of such an accusation gives the lie direct to those who have recourse to such dastardly imputations against the ministry of angels—that holy communion with the loved ones gone before of which the clergy in general are so totally and culpably ignorant. Washington Irving writing of Spiritualism remarks: "What could be more consoling than the idea that the souls of those whom we once loved were permitted to return and watch over our welfare?—that affectionate and guardian spirits sat by our pillows when we slept, keeping a vigil over our most helpless hours? that beauty and innocence which had languished into the tomb yet smiled unseen around us, revealing themselves in those blessed dreams wherein we live over again the hours of past endearment? A belief of this kind would, I think, be a new incentive to virtue, rendering us circumspect—even in our secret moments—from the idea that those we once loved were invisible witnesses of all our actions." As the poet has truly written—

"Could we perceive the shadows o'er us,
And behold that seraph band,
Long-lost friends would, bright before us,
In angelic beauty stand."

Frequently when the opponents of Spiritualism cannot meet its advocates in fair argument, they have recourse to what some one else has written on the subject, thus ignoring the leading principle of true religion, viz., that each individual is solely accountable for his own thoughts, words, and actions. Is a member of, say the Church of England, responsible for what a Roman Catholic, a Mormon, or an Unitarian Christian states or does? If not, why should a rational Spiritualist be held accountable for what an irrational one writes, or for the wrongs he commits? I wish it to be fully and distinctly understood that I do not profess to be responsible for either the statements or the actions of others. The rational religionist who knows the truth of man's continued existence is a law unto himself. He does not rely upon a fixed creed, or on mere opinions formed by a class of men who make a living by preaching about matters of which in reality they have not the slightest proof or knowledge, but, more sensibly, he investigates the subject and judges for himself. Superstitionists, on the other hand, foolishly believe without evidence, and irrationally rely for information regarding the life to come on fabulous stories about the spirit-world and its inhabitants, related in an antiquated book which is full of contradictions and absurdities, owing to its having been written by ignorant and superstitious men; whilst they reject living evidence within their reach, and ignore the testimony of respectable witnesses who, in more enlightened times, have for years made Spiritual science

their earnest study and investigation. The consequence of this has been that whilst the physical sciences and the arts have made rapid advances, religion has been almost at a standstill; and this will continue to be the case until the evidence of those who—without any worldly gain or credit to be derived therefrom—have made Spiritual science their special study, is placed on the same footing as that of those men who have made the physical sciences the subject of their investigations.

"Nothing makes men more drunk than prejudice:
It shuts their ears and seals up both their eyes;
Reason it drags in fetters from its throne:
Truth it expels, and error reigns alone."

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE INFINITE.

(From the Spanish of Balmes.)

TRANSLATED BY C. W. ROUNER, M.D., BENALLAN.

FIRST CHAPTER.

"In my Father's house are many mansions."—John XIV. 2.

"But there, beyond the planet,
There reigns true happiness;
There are worlds without sin;
There dwells truth undeffiled."

TOBIAS.

THE STARS! What mortal has not allowed his glance to rest for a moment on those grand, brilliant globes which roll continually, and without ever leaving their paths, through space?

What being has not directed his thought towards that grand Maker of those thousands of worlds? Without a doubt all human beings must have tried to penetrate there with their thoughts, to divine, and to believe that those vivifying trains of flickering lights are mysteries to know which it has not yet been conceded to human wisdom.

What error has thus induced you to cavil, poor humanity?

You may well believe that your progress has been real, and that you have only to admire your magnifying telescopes that sun which gives you light and life; that moon which spreads over you its vivid splendours, and those stars which compel you to raise your thoughts to God.

Well may you believe that beyond merely scrutinising their surfaces, you will one day be able to penetrate to their centres in order to gaze with wonderment on the inexpressible poetry which they contain.

The worlds of space are the habitations or mansions of humanity. They are worlds of privileged enjoyment, worlds of torment, worlds of ascent, and worlds of ever-increasing perfection. This and more than this are those globes which appear to you from your diminutive planet as little sparkling lights; and the nature and object of which you do not yet comprehend, with all your wisdom and science of to-day.

The worlds are the matter; from it are formed the bodies; the spirit resembles space, which has neither form nor colour, and is devoid of change, and independent of time.

The worlds advance progressively.

It is not long ago since your world, in its formation, was a darkness, a nebuloosity, a winter; when it assumed another form, the rocks were dispersed by the lavas of the countless volcanoes which spread over your world in its first beginning; from these rocks sprang the mosses; afterwards followed the other plants, and from the plants sprang up the animals and man, namely, primitive man, the savage, who lived on roots; the human ogre who had no other tools than his teeth, his nails, his brute force; the brutish man, who used his fangs as weapons of defence; man, in fine, whose only science consisted in brute instinct. This miserable savage lived in the dense forests of those days, sought the company of wild beasts, and often, during an excess of fury and passion, precipitated himself down into the craters of volcanoes, or from the heights of mountains, or was carried away by the billows of the sea, which frequently overwhelmed large portions of the then *terra firma* of the earth.

In those times everything stood in a proper relation: the new formation of nature, of the nature of our earth, was in complete harmony with the newly formed human race; rude was the globe, and rude was man.

A few centuries elapsed: the rising vegetation produced flowers; the sea remained beneath its boundaries; in man rose the thought of civilisation; and thus was the realisation of progress brought about.

Men tilled the ground, men built houses, men divided themselves into tribes; this was a step forward. The tribes had their mandarins, and that meant the recognition of law: was that not a most memorable step in advance? Was that not progress?

Again much time elapsed; and the earth in its revolution marked a third step of moral advancement. Men asked for a religion; their glances, indicating the first vestiges of a soul, were directed to the sun, and they held the sun worthy of divine adoration. This, in truth, was a progressive idea, for although the sun was not the true temple for men's prayers, it was a sufficiently important work of the Creator, and as such was able to form the basis of a worship for semi-savage man, fit to raise him gradually from his degraded state of life.

Man then worshipped the sun with great ardour; brought it propitiatory sacrifices of blood, by and by mixed with a few grains of wheat. Love held still a very narrow space in the heart of man: the manner in which they loved the sun constituted no true love; still it was the commencement of that love towards whose heart mankind is travelling.

Henceforth progress became possible. If from their religion rose love, from that love rose in its turn self-interest; self-interest at that time meant already progress, for from that sprang ambition, and a well-directed ambition leads to the final union of the human race; and ambition for the advancement of true happiness constitutes already a high step in the ladder of human civilisation and progress.

Let us, however, return to the primitive times. Self-interest formed a fourth era in the history of the human species. Self-interest was already more than a mere instinct; a certain degree of intelligence had henceforth taken possession of man, and made him look for better food in the vast domain of nature; he also found means to clothe his nakedness, and began to speak a rude species of language; one tribe attempted to excel another, and this attempt was followed by war; men made weapons for themselves; they voted orations and triumphs to those of their warriors who had distinguished themselves by the greatest amount of ferocity and cruelty; and they invented gods, who were supposed to look with favour upon their victims. Then followed the long series of mythological inventions; incense was burnt for Bacchus, Jupiter was adored, and they chose rulers whom they called kings. And this was the fifth epoch of the globe: this constituted the fifth step in the ladder of human progress.

From this time on, civilisation became gradually more progressive; man began to recognise the family and its duties, established laws, and inquired for his destiny at the seat of his gods. This was a real step in advance. Man already began to think of his future destiny; and thus sought, without thinking of it, the thread of the great science, "seek and you shall find."

The regeneration followed later; that was when Jesus suffered the tortures of death and martyrdom, as Socrates had done before him, in order to demonstrate with superhuman firmness his love for an invisible being which he called God and Father.

Man now remained for a while in suspense, or at a stand-still, and from this suspense, or stand-still, is dated the rapid progress of civilisation. The light of the Infinite was spread over many brains; ignorance gradually receded to make place for greater ideas, such as those of Columbus, or Guttenberg, Fulton, and of so many other revelators of great works and discoveries. Science spread itself almost in all parts of the world, and man generally began to respect with more fervour the creations of truth.

The great revolution caused by the advent of the great Master was also the greatest progress which was made during the whole time since the formation of our

planet. This was the sixth epoch of man's advancement.

There had to come another and still greater step in advance, and this is the sublime science which so many brains and hearts now-a-days embrace with true faith.

Spiritism has come to initiate mankind into the mystery of the great truth of an Infinite Being. Men in former times believed without verifying the cause of their beliefs; and now those who have investigated the science of ethics, believe they have found the fundamental basis of human reason.

Reason has grown; it has, so to speak, woken up in men; customs and habits have changed; man knows God better and worships him more; he makes secret sacrifices; all have a tendency towards moral progress, and man calls now man "brother." Is this not a truly substantial advance?

You see here seven different epochs, each making a great step towards true wisdom, the creation of God forming or evolving out of itself the necessary conditions to arrive later on at that state of perfection where, as in other more advanced worlds than ours, love takes the place of religion, faith and trust the place of laws, where peace and harmony reign eternal.

As the work of God thus travels towards its goal, we shall at last have infinite morality, consoling wisdom, unity of thought; in fine, Goon, which is the sole principle of God.

Ignorance will be destroyed in proportion as times advance; our present laws will uniformly become converted into divine laws, and the discoveries which will be made from day to day will render man capable to comprehend that intelligence aided by truth will be strong enough to obtain a glimmering view, even from the low platform of this world, of that immeasurable and sovereign grandeur of the Creator, the only true *Pontifex Maximus*.

What are now falsely called impossibilities will disappear before the advances of man; every new and fertile idea that springs up will find a ready echo in all human hearts; abuses will have vanished; the ambitious pursuit of wealth will cease; offences will be readily pardoned, and there will no longer be room for vituperation. The king will have exchanged his sceptre for the plough; the hermit will have deserted his hermitage; the monk will have been converted; the working-man will be made acquainted with science; the physician will work miracles: he will make the lame walk, and he will heal the lepers; musical melodies will be far sweeter; a perpetual spring will reign in the woods and meadows.

There will no longer be prisoners, for the gaols will be abolished; health will become perfect, for all will hate vice; the air will be more purifying by keeping it saturated with fragrant essences; the lark and nightingale will sing in undisturbed liberty, and fearless of the hands of captors in the woods; the gazelle will no longer be hunted to death; our daily food will be more refined, for the unreasoning animal will have kept pace in its organic process of development with reasoning man; our means of illumination and lighting will have become more splendid; all colours much brighter and fresher—the reflex of the splendours of God's heaven.

Still it would be impossible to determine how far we are yet from the realisation of all this. Man, however, will have all this when he conceives an earnest desire to possess it. Much work will yet be required from us; we will have to find yet an inexhaustible source of happiness in disinterested study; we shall be obliged to fathom the depths of the infinite, in order to be able to solve the problem here presented to us; for whilst the heads do not think for themselves, and the hearts of men remain closed, our souls' faculties will remain in a state of latency. Work only, nourished by celestial hope, will attain to true justice. Only religion, accompanied by trust and fidelity, will be able to accomplish this grand progress. We must, however, expect that it will take a few centuries yet before the spouse of ignorance will give mankind its liberty; we must be prepared to see many human hearts yet dying the death of martyrs before we can say—"We have realised the much desired redemption; we have been the creators of a perfect alliance; to-day we are wise, because we are just."

The liberty of freethought will then no longer exist, for human brains will all then be on an equal level, all intellects equally elevated; there will then be no property, for all will belong to all. Our language will resemble the tender language of the birds, the sweet murmur of the breeze, or the lulling sound of the brooklet; it will always be soft and gentle, ever ready to bless, never to wound or curse. Poetry will then invariably encircle the world, for poetry contains all that is good, all that is loving and lovely; and henceforth the earth which you inhabit, changed in the divine sight of progress, will be like an oasis on which you will meet with infinite sweetness during your terrestrial journey; whilst at the same time marching in the direction of another Eden, of a still higher goal of your souls. Oh, how good is God, and for how great an end has he created man! What! shall we be ungrateful to His faithful call? Shall we turn a deaf ear to His sweet voice? What! shall we permit our precious hours to glide away stealthily without rousing ourselves from our degrading lethargy, lest our watchful spirit get terrified in the presence of the burnt sacrifice, or holocaust, of matter—of that matter which secretly shudders at the sight of the destruction and necessary abandonment of its illusions? O, if only the human spirit could triumph, our whole planet would triumph; if, however, matter should be the victor, ignorance would celebrate a victory, and all progress would necessarily be much retarded.

How often will your spirit, liberated from matter in the dreams of his sleep, have hastened across those infinite spaces; and, infinitely surprised at the marvellous works contained therein, how often will he have pledged himself and formed an ardent desire to bring about in the future the advancement of the soul by developing in mankind all that is greatest in it, such as human love, hoping that on his waking from that more real sleep, called death, he may enter into the eternal enjoyment of all that which he has considered as most desirable here below in his highest moments of liberty! And how often, also, will your spirit, yet clad in the garment of flesh, have been disturbed in its innermost being, and forgetting, in his unconquerable somnolence and sleepiness, that which he had promised to do, how often yet will that spirit of yours turn back again to his old errors; how often will he allow himself to be deceived by false flatteries, retarding thereby his progress and ascension to a higher platform of perfection.

But if your spirit, stimulated by a foretaste of that delightful life which is man's proper inheritance, desires to struggle let him struggle and wrestle freely. Oh, do not let him succumb. For, when you wake up from your sleep of the earth, how great will be your joy! Your agony will have passed away from your memory, and your reward alone will be eternally present to your spirit.

If to-day mankind is divided into distinct classes, the day will come, later in time, when there will be only one class formed. Ignorance suddenly roused up and shaken by superior spirits, who to-day assist by taking their posts in the most important concerns of your life, will be finally silenced, and a state of watchful waking taking the place of drowsy sleep will solely and uniformly possess the brain of mankind, and with a steady hand guide all human affairs.

If to-day the infinite is merely guessed at, by and by it will be clearly recognised when we get possession of its truth; and very soon the perpetual alliance and permanent brotherhood of all the races of the globe will be the last and highest step reached on the ladder of the human family, when all will meet in true wisdom, having thus faithfully accomplished the objects of their terrestrial mission.

The basis of the initiation of truth has been laid; all that is now required is to advance its interests. We have now only to take care to listen to the voice of our superiors, and to exclude the influence of narrow-minded inferiority. Let the higher souls of men attend to the duties attached to the execution of this grand work; let them with reverence fear but one thing—God; let mankind practice what is good; let not men look upon our inspirations as absurdities; and thus will the truth be fulfilled, for the road to it will have been made level by the arduous work of millions of labourers.

CONTEMPORARY NOTES.

"A. T. T. P." (Judge Peterson) the well known recorder of "Historical Controls," again contributes his "Controls" to the *Medium and Daybreak*, the first being that of "Ralph Waldo Emerson." Speaking at a public meeting in London lately, he remarked "that more sensible things in regard to Spiritualism appeared in that paper than in any other, and he wished the Editor would occupy more of the space at his disposal with his own ideas. But the Editor's principle was freedom to all, so that disputable points might be freely discussed, at the same time himself occupying quite an independent position, and not bowing to any form of religious dogma whatever. He (the speaker) liked to see a paper sail under true colours, and show such definite lines as to indicate the course it was leading to."

ALTHOUGH I have attended so many materialising séances, I could count on the fingers of one hand those at which the conditions in regard to sitters approximated to what I conceive they should have been to have insured the best manifestations the spirit could have presented through the medium. There were, in fact no proper "test-conditions at all; and in saying this I have no reference to the medium, but to the circle. This is what needs to be tested, far more than the medium. As far as the latter is concerned, the phenomena in most cases present their own tests of genuineness; and in my opinion no other is usually required; indeed, no other is safe. But where persons sit in a circle, not to see Spiritual manifestations, but to detect fraud, they bring to the experiment an influence which, notwithstanding all their devices to tie, cage, lock, bolt, and otherwise confine the medium, will inevitably bring about what they are bent upon finding. The appliances of what has been aptly called "the rat-trap school of investigation" will never be of any avail as a substitute for careful observation, accurate reasoning thereon, and more especially a pure, elevated, honest, and passive spirit in the observer.—*Professor Kiddle, in Banner of Light.*

ALL forms of religion become gradually destitute of their pristine fire, and then comes the revivifying spirit; and men cry out that religion is dying. Whereas they mean Theology, and false Theology besides.—*Light.*

SLOWLY the two wings of the radical army separate; one moves toward the frozen arid region of the Northwest, with its eternal silence, its blank wastes, leading to the dreary solitude of nothingness. The other shapes its course toward the land of beauty, peace, and holiness, the land of the ultimate fruition of all our intuitions and aspirations.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal.*

JUDGE Carter, writing to the *Banner* from Cincinnati, describes two séances with "the very efficient medium, Mr. Jesse Shepard," at which some extraordinary musical demonstrations took place. At one of these some thirty ladies and gentlemen were present—merchants, tradesmen, lawyers, doctors, and professors—and also the distinguished quartette of lilliputians, Mr. and Mrs. Gen. Tom Thumb (Mr. and Mrs. Stratton), and Mr. and Mrs. Bleeker. The little people had many wonderful private test-manifestations. Among others, the spirit of little Minnie Warren came to her sister (Mrs. Stratton), and made herself readily known to her by touch and conversation. After the séance, the General and his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Bleeker repeated again that in all their experience with mediums, this séance was the most edifying to them, and in their travels they have had a good deal of experience, as wherever they go they never lose an opportunity of being with approved mediums.

JUDGE Dailey, one of the leading lawyers in Brooklyn, N.Y., some months ago had his attention directed to Spiritualism, confronted by the facts of which, his doubts were vanquished, and he became a believer. He has been taken to task by the *Brooklyn Eagle*, which

condemns more especially form-materialisation. The Judge asserts and defends the truth of materialisation with great vigor, and after giving some striking experiences, says, "It is upon such or similar evidence that I have based my belief in the possibility of materialisation, and I shall consider myself unfit for my profession, for the bench, or any other place except a lunatic asylum, when I fail to observe and act upon my own senses, and that corroborative evidence which comes from others who observe the same as I do."—*Banner of Light.*

DEATH is only a second birth, a blossoming of the physical bud into a spiritual organism that shall ascend the golden spiral that leads to the celestial zones where new opportunities for advancement and unfoldment are presented. Mirabeau said, "Let me die to the sound of delicious music;" and Mozart whispered, "Let me once more hear those notes which have so long been my delight." Make the last moments of the dying pleasant; to die when crowned with the golden fruitage of a well-spent life is one of the most desirable events. In the present effulgent light and revelations of Spiritualism, undue grief should never be manifested over the remains from which the soul has taken its departure in the regular order of Nature.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal.*

FROM recent issues of the *Philosophic Inquirer*, (a secularist journal published in India), we gather that its Editor has got into trouble with some of his "free-thinking contributors and subscribers," in consequence of the tolerant attitude of his paper towards the Theosophical Society and its founders. A correspondent, replying in defence of Colonel Olcott, refers to a class of freethinkers, "Who would not study books which breathe doctrines opposed to theirs, either through indifference, or afraid that they might be irresistibly led to change their favorite views, and who are therefore incompetent judges." We regret to say that this type of freethinker (so called) is not confined to Madras.

I COULD quote numerous cases in which spirits have impressed great ideas and great inventions upon mortals, but will merely mention the case of Dr. Dennis of Cincinnati, whose invention for capping teeth and freeing the sufferer from excruciating pains almost immediately, was given to him in a half dream, by spirits, and according to the testimony of several skilled dentists whom I have talked with, and who are using the process, it is far superior to anything of the kind ever before devised. We shall probably never know, in this life, how often our angel friends assist us in both earthly and celestial things.—*Dr. Babbitt, Banner of Light.*

SARGENT'S "Scientific Basis of Spiritualism" was his crowning work, matured by patient thought and long experience. In it, the beliefs which he held during the vigor of his life, he restated with ripe experience, and expanded with added illustration on the verge of the tomb. His faith was more firm, his knowledge more exact, and his desire to make others partakers of his own blessing more burning. He had a keen scorn for "science" falsely so-called, and a truer reverence for every form of knowledge. And with all, he had a conviction that every day seemed to deepen, that he and we, the much despised Spiritualists, are living in the light of the enduring and the eternal, while they—the scientific materialists—are groping in the twilight of error. So he died—as men say; so he lives still—as I know.—M.A., Oxon's "Reminiscences of Epes Sargent," *Psychological Review.*

WE regret to record the death of Professor Zöllner, of the Chair of Astronomy at Leipzig, at the age of forty-eight. He was, as our readers know, an ardent scientific defender of Spiritualism, and his book on "Transcendental Physics" will long be a standard work amongst those interested in the subject.—*Light, May 6, 1882.*

THE LYCEUM.

DURING the past two months an attempt has been made to secularise the Melbourne Progressive Lyceum. It was initiated by Mr. Walker, who, on Sunday, June 4th, read from the *Harbinger of Light* the report of the Lyceum Building Fund Meeting, characterising the basis arrived at by that meeting as narrow and sectarian, and intimating his intention of resigning his office if it were not altered. During the following week the Building Fund Committee met and unanimously approved of the basis, expressing it in the following words—"The objects of the Lyceum are: The harmonious development of the physical, intellectual, and religious faculties of the young. The institution is founded upon a broad Spiritualistic basis, demanding only from those who aspire to be teachers, a recognition of a supreme, beneficent intelligence, and the essential spiritual nature of man. But whilst these two ideas permeate the religious and intellectual curriculum of the Lyceum, dogma is studiously avoided, the principle being not to induct but to educe, and assist the young mind into rational modes of thought."

Much dissatisfaction having been expressed at Mr. Walker's impingement upon the ordinary course of the session, disparagement of the principles of the institution, and indirect reflections upon the author of the report who was not present, the general committee, apprehensive of a repetition of the interruption on the following Sunday, arranged for the session to be shortened and for a meeting of members to be held immediately after, to consider Mr. Walker's resignation. The meeting was accordingly announced, and a number of members and visitors remained. Mr. Lang was voted to the chair, and Mr. Walker opened the proceedings by endorsing what he had said the previous Sunday, and objecting to the basis determined upon by the Building Fund Committee. Mr. Kennedy objected to the Lyceum departing from its original intention and long-approved Spiritualistic basis. Mr. Terry said that although the Lyceum had been generally known and accepted as a Spiritualistic institution, it was equally well known that no one had ever been excluded from it on account of his religious opinions. During the nine years of its existence, Mr. Walker was the first one to his knowledge who had charged it with narrowness. The sentiment of the Lyceum was so apparent in its book, that it had not been found necessary to affirm it amongst its members; but when we decided to go outside to collect subscriptions for a building, it became necessary to formulate a distinct basis, so that people might know what they were subscribing for; hence the printed basis which they had heard read.

The chairman pressed Mr. Terry for a motion; in response he said he was not prepared with one, but understanding that Mr. Walker had stated on the previous Sunday he would resign unless the basis were altered, and the committee having since confirmed the said basis, he would move that Mr. Walker's resignation be accepted.

Mr. Joske supported Mr. Walker and said he knew of an avowed atheist who had held office in the Lyceum.

After some other expressions of opinion, Mr. Walker began a vehement address charging the Lyceum with inconsistency in using the writings of Materialists and closing the doors in their faces. When he had been speaking for a considerable time, Mr. Terry rose to a point of order; but an apparently organised party, consisting largely of non-members, who had through the whole proceedings systematically acted as Mr. Walker's "claqueurs" kept up such a persistent din that the chairman was unable to understand what Mr. Terry rose for, and thinking he was interrupting the speaker, motioned him to sit down. Mr. Walker thereupon became more vehement and personal, and at the close of his speech, at the request of Messrs. Joske and Kirkland, withdrew his resignation. The matter was then supposed to be settled, but at the next committee meeting Mr. Joske presented himself, and reopened the question. He not being a member of committee this was objected to, but Mr. Walker having intimated

that had not Mr. Joske anticipated him he should have introduced the matter, and Mr. Joske threatening to bring it before the morning session if not allowed to go through with it before the committee, an arrangement was made for a special meeting of the Lyceum, to be held on the afternoon of Sunday, 23rd July. Mr. Terry, who conducted the Lyceum on that day, having intimated that no one but actual voting members of the Lyceum would be admitted to the meeting, the turbulent element of the previous meeting was excluded, and about 150 members attended. Mr. Terry, as vice-conductor, took the chair, and said, from the notice of the meeting it would appear that it was called to "adopt rules for the guidance of the Lyceum." He did not understand this, as we had already rules and a constitution. As Mr. Joske had been the mover in this matter, he presumed he had a motion which would enlighten them.

Mr. Lang having read a letter from Mr. Walker defining dogmas and suggesting rules, Mr. Terry was called upon to read the constitution and rules of the Lyceum, upon which Mr. Cunningham rose to move a resolution to the effect that the constitution adopted at a special session, held at the Masonic Hall, August 9th, 1874, was adequate to the requirements of the Lyceum, and should form the basis of any printed rules it might be thought necessary to publish. He said it was well known that an attempt was being made to upset the Spiritual basis of the Lyceum, and thrust Materialism into it; forcibly pointing out the deficiencies of the latter he showed its incompatibility with the principles of the Lyceum, and urged the members to reject it. Mr. Dawes seconded the motion.

Mr. Hoogklimmer moved as an amendment that "The objects of the Lyceum are: The harmonious development of the physical, intellectual, and religious faculties of the young. The institution is founded upon a broad Spiritualistic basis, demanding only from those who aspire to be teachers, a recognition of a supreme, beneficent intelligence, and the essential spiritual nature of man." Seconded by Mr. Johnston.

Mr. Keep moved a further amendment: That all members of this Lyceum shall be able to take office should they be so elected by the majority of members. Seconded by Mr. Lees.

This amendment being put only obtained nine votes against about 140.

The previous motion and amendment being in harmony, it was agreed they should be put as separate resolutions, and they were carried with only one dissentient.

The Spiritualistic basis of the institution is therefore most definitely affirmed, and it is to be hoped that the small but demonstrative element which has disturbed its harmony will be satisfied, and make no further attempts to Broaden (?) our platform.

MR. THOMAS WALKER.

WE have received a letter of twenty pages from Mr. Walker, traversing and objecting to the narrative concerning him which appeared in our last issue.

We stated in our prefatory remarks that "We should adhere strictly to facts, having no space to waste in polemical discussion." We must, therefore, decline to publish, not only Mr. Walker's letter, but other correspondence on the opposite side which has reached us. As Mr. Walker, however, challenges some of our statements, it is incumbent on us to substantiate them or admit our error, and that we shall briefly do.

The first definite objection is to the statement that he induced the late secretary of the V. A. S. to make a special application for his admission before the conclusion of the experiments. This objection is to us an apparent evasion or play upon words. The gentleman referred to is now absent from the colony, but the circumstances by which the application was brought about are known to us, and the substitution of the word "taunted," or "bounced," though it would not read so well, would make the statement more literally correct. The only other statement that is distinctly challenged is that the V. A. S. consented to their choir assisting

him, lending him their room and piano for practice, and offering him the free use of their harmonium. The latter he declined; the two former he has availed himself of up to the present. With regard to the first part, we extract the following from the Association's minute book:

"Moved by Mr. Terry, seconded by Mrs. Syme: That it having been stated that the choir were willing to assist Mr. Walker in his future lectures, the committee consent to their doing so. The committee also resolved to loan Mr. Walker the harmonium until such time as it is required by the Association."

With regard to the latter, Mr. Walker states that he told the choir the first Sunday he lectured on his own account, that if they sang for him it must be as *his* choir, and not as the Association's, and that they all agreed to this. That they used the room he admits, but "That was their look out and not mine."

Now, as a matter of fact, no officer of the Association was advised of this compact, and it was not till the beginning of July, when the choir was asked to go into practice for Mr. Denton's lectures, that the Association became aware of disaffection existing in its ranks. As soon as they were advised of this they took steps to form an entirely new choir, leaving the old one intact with Mr. Walker. That the said choir did not as a whole understand Mr. Walker that they were *his* choir, may be inferred from the fact that we received a letter from one of them, in July, signed "Librarian V. A. S. Choir." Be that as it may, it is clear that Mr. Walker was aware that what he calls *his* choir were using the Association's Room, piano, and gas, and he was a party to the transaction. The Association has been imposed upon in the matter, and if Mr. Walker likes to throw the whole responsibility on his choir, he is welcome to do so.

THE May No. of "Psyche" is a very excellent one, containing besides a continuation of "Sphygmography," a fine illustration of one of Professor Zollner's experiments with Slade, and description thereof; also an account of a Test Spirit Photograph, obtained through the mediumship of Mrs. L. Carter, at Kansas city, last March, in the presence of nine witnesses, who attest the circumstances under which it was obtained. From a circular which has reached us we regret to find that "Psyche" is for the present suspended; an effort, however, is being made to raise funds for its continuance, which we hope will be successful.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

EVOLUTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Darwin, the great apostle of the doctrine of Evolution, has just left us for the higher spheres, admired and respected. The doctrine of Evolution, which is accredited to him, was clearly taught by Lord Bacon's spirit, at a séance in America in 1854. I copy the following for the information of your readers from the book "Spiritualism," by Judge Edmonds and Dr. Dexter, a portion of which I forward for the information of your readers:—

"The circle being assembled, through Dr. Dexter it was said,—The demonstration of the works of God, is better evidence of His power than though He had finished them at once. Had the works been entirely finished, there would have been no new developments. Nature, instead of putting forth new forms and shapes, and every new form and shape manifesting an attribute in advance, would have gradually decayed, and thus, at this period of the world's history, the whole of its surface and even its depths might have been in a state of decay.

One of the highest purposes which the Creator has manifested in his designs, is the ability, the power inherent in every created thing to exist, as it were, by the very principles of its creation. Thus, instead of the

world's decaying, its mountains crumbling to the dust and disappearing from the surface of the earth, whatever change takes place in matter it always enters into some new form of combination, and thus lives, grows, develops, generates, by the inherent properties or principles of its creation, affording striking evidence of the great power of Him who fashioned everything.

And it is no more singular in reference to animated matter, that this principle of itinerant progression is visible in every animal that exists upon the earth, mankind not excepted, which is easily seen when we compare savages with civilised nations. When we examine inanimate objects, this we still discover; every situation offers inductions of interest. If we examine the strata in which is imbedded the fossil remains of the earliest animals which lived upon the earth, and trace the comparative advance and progress in the scale of existence from that period up to the present time, it would satisfy the most sceptical, that where one animal has been developed as a germ, that animal has in the progress of time and circumstances put on new attributes, assumed new combinations within itself, and thus gone on increasing, progressing, step by step, till the present age.

Do you ask what is all this for? The answer is simple. There is no department of Nature, animal or vegetable or mineral, that is not indelibly stamped with proof of its progressive advance; and what is also the fact, that the different climates and mode of culture and soil, in which they may be distributed, so modify or change their original nature, that when a vegetable indigenous to India is transplanted to Canada, if it can live in that climate, in the course of a few years it assumes distinguishing characteristics that entirely divert it of any semblance of its former appearance and attributes. So also with animals, and so also with mankind. The farther North you go, the more do animals corresponding to the same genera or species, in warm climates, change their external features so as scarcely to be recognised.

Again, the question is suggested in your minds, why is this so? I answer that to the inquiring mind, to the searcher after truth, it was this display, these evidences of external progress in material things, that was the handbook in which might be read the same condition of things existing beyond this world.

The question, too, is asked, how far back into years, since the earth was fit for man's abode, shall we go for the first evidence of man's existence? At what period of time did he first stand on this earth, so much in advance of all created things, and so much more omnipotent than any other by the possession of a living soul? If we plunge into earth's centre, and raise the deepest strata to the surface, we find time is indicated there! Descend ocean's depths, and its dark bosom gives back no answer to the inquiry we make! Ascend the highest mountain, the evidences there are still barren of answer. Go where we will, seek where we will, we cannot tell at what period of time man made his first appearance upon this earth.

To the shrewd analytical mind one that searches, investigates, and compares, and claims to rule the earth by the power of his mind, and his affinity with God, by the connection of his spirit, would seem by the variety of properties which he manifests, the similarity of attributes and passions which he indicates, to have been the joint product of the aggregate development of every animal that lives and breathes upon the earth, for in the vast and multiplied demonstration of his mind, in his anger, his revenge, his lusts, his desires, his cunning, his ingenuity, his boldness, and his courage; his craftiness and hypocrisy, in his affections and his jealousies, in his envy and his pride, he assuredly gives evident token that he is something of almost every animal in his combination that lives and dies on earth."

The author of the above appears to have been the spirit of Bacon.

I. B. R.

[The book referred to contains another communication on the same subject, which, if space permits, we may publish in a future issue.—Ed. H. of Lt.]

FREEWILL AND NECESSITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR.—To deal adequately with this time-honoured problem, I could, and perhaps should, occupy the whole compass of the *Harbinger*. Feeling myself, however, to be an intruder in your columns, I must court brevity, at the same time claiming your indulgence for whatever may be submitted. Of Max Müller's many brilliant sayings, there is none truer than that "endless misunderstandings and controversies might have been avoided if both sides had clearly defined what they did, and what they did not, understand by certain words." It is just possible, though I think not, that Mr. Browne and myself are engaged in a mere logomachy, and that our sentiments are more in unison than at first sight would appear. With a view therefore to facilitating a clear apprehension of the matter, I proceed to state what I understand to be denoted by Necessity, or, more accurately, Determinism, and by Freewill. Determinism means that the great law of Cause and Effect is dominant in the realm of Ethics, that all chance or spontaneity is excluded from its sway, that human volitions follow their antecedents in regular and unvarying order, and that character is the necessary resultant of a particular combination of organisation with environment. As a writer in the *Westminster Review* has expressed it, Determinists maintain that an invariable sequence exists between the sum of motives present in the mind of a given individual and the action (or attempted action) which follows. Freewill I understand to teach that there inheres with man a mysterious faculty or entity (called Will) which underlies all volitional energy, can operate in antagonism to a preponderance of motives, and is uninfluenced by them. Having thus defined my position, I proceed to review Mr. Browne's arguments. "I maintain," says Mr. Browne, "that man possesses Freewill within the bounds of Nature's laws." But what is Nature, and who shall circumscribe the operation and the incidence of her laws? To me, as to John Stuart Mill, Nature means the "sum of all phenomena, together with the causes which produce them," and I can conceive of no laws that are not Nature's laws, whether they pertain to mentality or to fiery worlds circling through realms of space. A man, says Mr. Browne, has not the power to alter the natural law of effect following cause, but he can vary many of the causes so as to produce an effect different from what would otherwise have ensued. What Mr. Browne, however, has to prove, is that the man's action in so varying the cause was itself undetermined; in other words, that the man *originated*, and not simply varied the cause. To prove that would, I venture to think, tax the mental agility of the most practised intellectual athlete. "Human logic," writes Häckel, "is incompetent to prove that any act is really spontaneous."

But in the next paragraph Mr. Browne makes a most "portentous concession"—one which seems to me to precipitate his whole superstructure into chaotic ruin—"That man to a certain extent is a creature of circumstances, and that the general outline of his life is in a great measure governed by pre-natal influences, his education, and his surroundings, I fully admit," but still Mr. Browne pleads for a certain residuum that is independent and undetermined. Will he indicate how far the individual is constrained by pre-natal influences, education, and environments? Let him take a case and show to what extent the acts are attributable to inherited qualities, and circumstances, past or present, and where the operation of an autonomous *Ego* intervenes. Let the line of demarcation be clearly drawn, or at any rate an attempt made. Then we have a strange admission: "From a purely philosophic point of view, the theory of absolute necessity, may appear conclusive," but it is not "in accord with practical experience." That must indeed be a "purely philosophic" theory which contradicts the facts of experience! Mr. Browne might as well talk of a "pure science" that negates the actualities of life.

Permit me now to traverse some of Mr. Browne's objections to the Necessity doctrine. First we have the impossibility of Prediction. *Et tu, Brute!* Mr. Browne a Spiritualist, and yet an unbeliever in Prediction! Why, Mr. Browne's friend, the Hon. J. M. Peebles, after stating the law of Prophecy, concludes "Angels, spirits, men, possess the power of prevision just in the ratio of exaltation in wisdom" (*Seers of the Ages*, p. 144). And it is Mr. Browne himself who has written that the prophecies of Cazotte, Swedenborg, and Mother Shipton, were fulfilled. It is Mr. Browne who tells us that "it is a prevalent but very erroneous idea that only those in ancient times could foretell events," and then immediately himself ventures upon a prolepsis "the fulfillment of which the writer [Mr. B.] is as certain as that he exists" (*Rational Christianity*, p. 321). It is Mr. Browne who relates a prediction by Foster the medium, and its literal verification (*Holy Truth*, p. 62)! There can be no clearer demonstration of the theory I advocate than the fact that man does possess, in some instances, the faculty of prevision—a truth which I have realised in my own experiences, events and combinations of occurrences in my career having been related with a specificity of delineation long anteriorly to their complete actualisation. But it may be asked, why is not this power more common, and its exercise more frequent? G. H. Lewes supplies the answer: "Owing to the complexity of the conditions, there is a variability in human acts which renders them difficult of prediction." For true prevision to be more general it would require, as Maudsley says, that one should "enter thoroughly into the inmost character of another person, and become exactly acquainted with the moving springs of his conduct in his particular relations of life." Then Mr. Browne urges that if Necessity is true, the voice of Conscience becomes a gross delusion. Conscience I find, Mr. Browne describing as that "intuitive sense of right and wrong implanted in every one," as "authoritative," and as enabling man "to choose between right and wrong." Will it surprise your correspondent to hear me say that I recognise no such "authoritative" monitor? Conscience, as Herbert Spencer shows, is but the accumulated experience of the past. Its deliverances have as often been on the side of vice as of virtue; the "still small voice" has as often been the whisper of a devil as the monition of a God. Conscience has said—Worship Jehovah and none other; and Conscience has commanded the adoration of Jupiter and of Venus, of an onion and of a snake. Conscience has said—Resist Tyranny; and submit to the Powers that be. Conscience commands fidelity to one wife; and Conscience institutes Polygamy. Conscience bade the Spartans steal; and Conscience immures the thief. Conscience approves the slave-trade; and Conscience declares it villainous. Conscience built the Inquisition, lighted Smithfield fires; and Conscience made the martyr brave the rack, and stand unmoved amid devouring flames. "There is hardly a nameable crime that Conscience has not somewhere consecrated as a duty, and there is hardly a nameable duty that Conscience has not somewhere condemned as a crime."

Next Mr. Browne objects that a Necessarian is a Fatalist, and by that he apparently means a Prodestinarian. Such, however, are not at all co-equivalent terms. Predetermination says that under certain conditions definite effects necessarily sequate definite causes—among the conditions personal effort counting as a factor. Then it is said "we have the power to subordinate our desires to the sense of duty within." Will Mr. Browne point out a single instance in which a man resists his strongest present impulse? Another objection against Determinism is that it is contradicted by the explicit declaration of our consciousness; we are, it is urged, conscious of exercising free volition. I deny the proposition; we are not really conscious of any such thing. "Man," says Spinoza, "is conscious of his will, but is unconscious of the cause by which it is determined." What has led some to suppose that consciousness so asserts, is clearly explained, and the fallacy exhibited, by Bain. "The speciality of voluntary action," he says, "as compared with the powers of the inanimate world, is that the antecedent and the con-

sequent are conscious or mental states, (coupled, of course with bodily states)." . . . "To be conscious of free-will must mean to be conscious before I have decided, that I am able to decide either way. Exception may be taken in *limine* to the use of the word consciousness in such an application. Consciousness tells me what I do or feel. But what I am able to do, is not a subject of consciousness." And that acute thinker, the late G. H. Lewes, adds, "Now consciousness, while revealing the fact of hesitation and choice, tells us that out of several impulses one has prevailed, but does not tell us that this one prevailed owing to extra-organic conditions."

Lastly, in this connection, I have to deal with the complaint that my theory abrogates all moral responsibility and moral reprobation. Why hold the criminal responsible, and punish him, for his misdeeds? I will adapt my reply from that of Prof. Tyndall: "Society has the right to protect itself against aggressive and injurious forces, whether they be bond or free, forces of Nature, or forces of Man. Had the criminal known that the treadmill or the gallows was in store for him, he might have avoided the crime. With a view to our own safety and purification, we are determined that the criminals shall not enjoy liberty of evil action in our midst. The public safety is a matter of more importance than the limited chance of their moral renovation, while the knowledge that the evil-doers have been severely punished may furnish to others that are ill-disposed the precise motive that will hold them back, and may afford to the offenders themselves a salutary lesson that will act as a prohibitory motive against the repetition of their crime. 'Punishment,' writes J.S. Mill, in his 'Examination of Sir William Hamilton,' 'proceeds on the assumption that the will is governed by motives. If punishment had no power of acting on the will, it would be illegitimate . . . Just so far as the will is supposed free—that is, capable of acting against motives, punishment is disappointed of its object and deprived of justification.' Spencer, too, says 'If there is no natural causation throughout the actions of incorporated humanity, government and legislation are absurd. Acts of Parliament may as well as not be made to depend on the drawing of lots or the tossing of a coin; or rather, there may as well be none at all.' And among the late Prof. W. K. Clifford's last utterances, is this: 'Moral reprobation and responsibility cannot exist unless we assume the efficacy of certain special means of influencing character.'

I am constrained to adopt the doctrine of Necessity or Determinism, because it is the verdict of experience. 'The Necessitarian,' says J. A. Froude, 'falls back upon the experienced reality of facts.' Reflection shows me, to take a case that will appeal to Mr. Browne's own consciousness, that his writing the able and courteous letter which is now under review was determined, first, by his own mentality—his acquired habits of thought and feeling; and, secondly, by my criticism of his position. Mr. Browne could not have written as he did had the conditions, internal and external, been otherwise. I adopt it, because I find that even its opponents exemplify it in practice. Mr. Browne, for instance, seeks to influence others and to supply them with motives which he hopes will induce them to act or think as he desires. Hence his many writings. Hence, also he sends his children to school, that their minds may be trained and their volitions made accurate.

I adopt it, because its negation is philosophically unthinkable. If volitions are not determined, how do they originate? If the cause of volition is not in motive, where can it be? As Spencer remarks, 'Either mental energies, as well as bodily ones, are quantitatively correlated to certain energies expended in their production, and to certain other energies which they initiate; or else nothing must become something, and something must become nothing.' I adopt it, because its negation plays havoc with Science, and reduces Philosophy to chaos. 'When natural causes,' admits Mr. Froude, 'are liable to be set aside and neutralised by what is called volition, the word

Science is out of place.' Deny uniformity of sequence in the phenomena of volition, and Sociology, Psychology, Mental Science, are at an end. Grant Free-will, and effete Theology returns to reign, Miracle is re-enthroned among the house-hold gods, and superstition spreads its upas branches unrestrained. Admit the existence of a metaphysical entity that operates uncontrolled—then order and uniformity die, and anarchy rules supreme.

Mr. Browne concludes, 'Take away conditional Free-will from man, and he at once becomes an irresponsible machine; Nature, as far as man is concerned, becomes a complete failure, without an aim or purpose, and its Author a senseless myth.' I rejoins—Let Determinism be disproved, and man becomes the hopeless victim of a capricious irresponsible power, a guerilla, a bandit, that invades and plunders the provinces of his mental, moral, spiritual being, robs him of the riches of reform, plucks the fragrant fruitage of patient effort, and leaves him paralysed, ever open to renewed eruptions and attacks; Nature becomes an undecipherable Sphinx, whose ways can never be interpreted, whose laws can never be formulated, and in whose operations no reliance can be reposed; and God is denuded of his prerogatives as solipotent, archaical Cause, for the 'Masterful Ego' becomes a deity, a Creator, possessing the power of primordial Causation.

In commencing this letter I promised to court 'Brevity.' As you doubtless, Sir, have regretfully observed, I have failed in my wooing, the 'coy maiden' has rejected all my advances. I can only ask you to extend your sympathy by publishing this communication as it stands.

Yours Obediently,

TRUE BLUE.

P.S.—A Melbourne newspaper, which seems to be on excellent terms with itself, and whose philosophising, could we but accept its own estimate of them, we should regard as of a very high order indeed, has been generous enough to comment in its leading columns upon my controversy with Mr. Browne. Those who pant for edification should read the *Daily Telegraph's* exposition (June 17th) of 'speculative thought; they will doubtless duly appreciate the exquisite *petitio principii* which it employs to annihilate the doctrine of Necessity. I refrain from remarking upon the *Telegraph's* uncalled for attack upon Spiritualism, and its misrepresentation of my criticism on Mr. Browne's position regarding Free-will.

T. B.

REMINISCENCES. BY H. V. S.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'HARBINGER OF LIGHT.'

DEAR SIR,—Several of your correspondents have made intelligent reference to the tendency in man to cling tenaciously to the religious impressions and prejudices with which the mind has been imbued in youth, even when he has become convinced that he cannot 'give a reason of the hope that is in him.'

I propose, in as brief a form as possible, to illustrate the painful and almost hopeless conflict of dawning truth and prejudice, in a narrative of the experiences of one who has passed from unreasoning faith to unreasoning scepticism, and from the latter to reason.

I shall record some incidents (the genuineness and originality of which I can vouch for) that will not, I think, be without interest to your readers; and if perchance my simple narrative should be read by those who have not advanced beyond the first stage of the progress above indicated, they may be assured that I shall studiously avoid every possible cause of offence.

For the purpose of enabling your readers to form a judgment in regard to the influences under which my first religious impressions were formed, it will be needful for me to give a concise account of my beginnings so far as they come within the range of my understanding.

My father was educated for the Church, but declined on conscientious grounds to take holy orders, even when offered as an inducement two rich livings in Cornwall that were in the gift of his aunt; however, he occasionally officiated for some of the leading dissenting minis-

ters in London and elsewhere. My mother was the daughter of a London merchant, and a Baptist minister built and endowed a chapel in which my father ministered, without stipend, for many years and to within two or three days of his death.

What is called family worship was daily observed in my father's house; and I well remember that the evening services were often so long that I became extremely anxious to hear the conclusion. I was continually reminded, both directly and indirectly, that whether I ate or drank, or whatsoever I did, it should all be done "to the glory of God." Even the school which I attended was opened daily by reading a chapter from the Bible, singing, and prayers. With such surroundings, if I had not become devout (which I did, as will be shown), the impediment would surely have rested in me. My first serious impression was the result of reading a tract that was given me when I was about seven years old. The substance of this tract was in verse:

"Stop! poor sinner, stop! and think before you further go.
Will you sport upon the brink of everlasting woe?"

I have never seen these verses since, but every line is still clearly remembered. I will pass over the hopes and fears of the succeeding seven or eight years, and confess that at the age of fifteen years, or thereabouts, I was a religious enthusiast. I was not allied to any religious body or denomination, but was a regular hearer of the Rev. Geo. Muller (the worthy founder of the Orphan Asylum at Bristol). I was also an attentive listener to frequent religious discussions, particularly between my father and my maternal grandfather. My father's creed was distinctly Calvinistic, and when my reasoning powers had gained strength and disturbed the peaceful calm of unreasoning faith, he has more than once said to me, in regard to Predestination and Election, "There is no hope for the man who does not believe that doctrine." Notwithstanding, my father taught me by example to reason upon all subjects without any reservation. This may appear very like a contradiction; however, it was a fact, which probably had more influence in giving direction to my mind than I was conscious of.

As evidence of my sincerity and earnestness, I may here state that when I was about eighteen years of age I heard of a young girl (Minnie Barnard) who had strayed from the path of virtue, and conceived the idea that it was my duty to do my utmost to reclaim her. I made it my business to see her brother (a stranger to me) and enquire, in as delicate a manner as could be, where she was to be met with. He evidently had no idea of the object I had in view. When I spoke to him of his sister he said, "I am sorry to say she is in a bad way, but I believe she would make a good wife if she was cared for." This mistake did not deter me from my purpose. I obtained information which enabled me with some difficulty to find her—in a brothel kept by "Mother Grace." I braved all the consequences of entering such a place, and when I enquired for Minnie Barnard, this disgusting old woman (Mother Grace) said, "Oh! its little Minnie you want; she is upstairs." Upstairs I went and had some talk with Minnie. I was very cautious, and did not even hint at the object of my visit. I informed her that I had been told by her brother that I should be likely to find her in that locality. I asked her to meet me on the following afternoon in a public park near by. She met me accordingly, and was moved to tears by my remarks, and at my suggestion that she should enter a reformatory, she expressed a desire to do so, but said she could not as she owed Mother Grace £2 13s., which she would have to pay before she could leave. I gave her the amount required (which left me almost without pocket money.) I then interviewed the matron of an asylum for fallen women. She remarked, "You are a very young gentleman to be engaged in a work of this kind, but the Lord will help you and bless your labours." The matron made arrangements to receive Minnie Barnard into the Asylum on the following day; but Minnie, it appeared, could not endure the probationary discipline,

(which in my opinion was too severe, almost equivalent to solitary confinement), for half the period required, as about two weeks after she had entered the Asylum, the matron informed me by letter that Minnie Barnard had left the Institution; so I have reason to doubt if the "Lord blessed my labours" in this particular case.

ENGLISH ITEMS. By J. J. MORSE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR FRIEND,—In response to your kind and oft-repeated request, I now send you just a short letter for the columns of the *Harbinger of Light*, and through it to make the acquaintance of my Australian co-workers in the cause of spiritual enlightenment and human progress. Careful in "get up," filled with solid matter, free from bickerings, the *Harbinger of Light* is ever a most welcome visitor to my reading table, and without doubt my pleasure is more than shared by your home readers, as is fairly testified by your recent enlargement. Go on Sir, and may mortals and immortals alike combine to maintain you in your good and useful work.

At the outset it must be confessed that a complete statement concerning the nature and status of Spiritualism here in Britain is impossible in the limits of a letter. An outline must suffice, for this occasion, and if you again accord me the hospitality of your columns more details shall be given in future contributions.

Our effective machinery here, so far as public work goes, comprises three weekly journals, two public platforms in the metropolis, and some forty public Sunday meetings in other portions of the kingdom.

The oldest, most widely circulated, and best known of our weeklies is *The Medium and Daybreak*, edited by Mr. James Burns, of whom more anon. The next in influence is the journal I have the pleasure to associate with, *Light*, which, if my modesty did not forbid, I should describe as excellent in its special work. Lastly we have the *Herald of Progress*, which is published in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and a weaker exponent of the liberalising influences of Spiritualism cannot be conceived of!

In addition to these there are two monthly magazines, one of which, no doubt, your readers are already acquainted with; I mean the *Psychological Review*, edited by Mr. John S. Farmer, an old friend of mine, and an earnest worker. Under his guidance the *Review* has been literally raised from the dead, and made a living success.

The other monthly is called *Psyche*, and is edited by W. H. Harrison, who has ceased issuing his weekly called *The Spiritualist* under that title; having renamed it as above, he now publishes it monthly. One thing is certain, Spiritualism cannot support more than two weeklies and one monthly, and it needs but little prescience to foresee that our Newcastle contemporary is not likely to be numbered with the army for long. The position of the *Medium* is secure, and *Light* is constantly getting a firmer foothold.

London possesses some four or five local societies, but they are not sustained by their members with that spirit of enthusiasm and self-sacrifice that should be. Yet in spite thereof, they all do far more work than one could expect under the circumstances they contend against.

We have, too, the Progressive Library and Spiritual Institution of Mr. James Burns, concerning which a word or two may not be out of place. In former years Mr. Burns was the promoter of all the public work done in the metropolis. He enabled the cause to benefit from the presence and services of Mrs. Hardinge, Dr. J. M. Peebles, Dr. Newton, Mrs. Tappan-Richmond, Mr. Tyerman, and other visitors to this country. He it was who organised the first series of Sunday services connected with the cause, that founded the first weekly journal, that gave us the first cheap editions of spiritual literature, that published our standard hymn book, and by pen and voice wrought energetically for our cause. Indeed I myself owe the publicity, the popularity, and the usefulness of my career to his initiative. That he

has been abused is only too true, but to the discriminating and reflective observer the work that Mr. Burns has done is a sufficient answer to the detractions of the envious. I cheerfully bear my testimony to his labour, and frankly admit that in some particulars I have misjudged him. I do not always see eye to eye with him upon many points of public work, but that he is terribly in earnest, assiduously devoted to the cause, and an enthusiastic champion of Spiritualism, none but a crass idiot would deny.

The other public effort of a distinctive nature in London is the British National Association of Spiritualists, a body formed at Liverpool in 1873, and the resolution for forming which was moved by the author of these lines. It has struggled hard against internal and external difficulties, was by turns too Christian for some, not enough for others, tried all ways to obtain the confidence of the cause, but only measurably succeeded in so doing, has been abused and sneered at, and a year and a half ago experienced an internal convulsion that inflicted the utmost havoc in its ranks, and ere these lines reach you it will have as a "national" body ceased to exist, it being about to be reconstituted under the title of "The Central Association of Spiritualists." It has tried hard to do its work, but it was never able to get a good grip of provincial spiritualism, which is the backbone of the cause in this country. As an association of educated and well-to-do people, professing Spiritualism, it met a want upon the part of such people for a rallying place, but as for helping on the great work of spiritual reform it never seemed to be able to get at such a line of action. Indeed, the time of a "national" union is not yet; our people won't have it, for fear of shackles, and they are not far wrong either, while again we are not united enough as to scope, aims, or principles, for a national union to be possible just yet. I once hoped otherwise, experience has taught me that hope is not to be realised as soon as I once expected.

Yet the B.N.A.S. has done no little good. It has created one of the best spiritualistic libraries in the kingdom. It offers the best reading room accommodation in the country. Its discussion meetings have been singularly useful, and in the defence of Dr. Slade it did yeoman service, while as a centre of union for the better classes it fills an important and useful mission. My opinion is that in taking steps to re-constitute, the association is doing exactly the proper thing to be done. It will by so doing preserve its use, retains its valuable library for the use of students, keep up a place that none need be ashamed of, socially speaking, and win the sympathy of many who have thought its previous programme was alike too ambitious, and most unwise.

Now, Sir, having given you a very rough outline, chiefly devoted to metropolitan matters, it occurs to me that a further encroachment upon your space would be unwise at present. Let me reserve for a future letter further details, and then bye-and-bye, with your permission, I will endeavour to keep you posted a little concerning matters here, at home, shall I say?

With fraternal greetings, then, to all, I remain your friend and fellow labourer,

J. J. MORSE.

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE for May contains a beautiful story, evidently written by one who, if not a Spiritualist, is at all events familiar with Spiritualistic literature and the descriptions given by seers and clairvoyants of life and occupations in the spirit-world. The "Little Pilgrim," the heroine of the story, is a woman who, having fought bravely for fifty years with the troubles of this life passes away during sleep to the higher one; but so natural are all her surroundings that for a time she is unable to realise that she has quitted mortal life. The description of her sensations and her gradual awakening to a consciousness of her improved condition of being, is very beautiful, and its incidents of spirit-life and work are calculated to impress the reader with more natural conceptions of the after-life than are generally prevalent.

AN UNEXPECTED SIGHT INTO THE SPIRIT WORLD.

SIR,—A lady who knows nothing of Spiritualism tells me that for about eight days when she was in bed and wide awake in broad daylight, and trying to think of something else so as to dismiss the appearances, she saw as plainly as if substantial, persons, rooms, and furniture beautiful beyond expression, and unlike any scenery on this earth; these were seen distinctly with eyes open or shut. Rooms of surpassing beauty, the walls and furniture decorated with real flowers, and interspersed with gems and sparkling jewels. Two men dressed in white were walking up a wide stairway with columns in the building. She saw a woman with broad face not pleasant to look at, but of the hundreds she did see most were pleasing and happy looking. She saw various rooms and things she cannot describe. These are facts, others must account for them. After she was up and about again the appearances were not noticed by her.

Yours truly,
AN INQUIRER.

COMMUNION WITH SPIRITS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—Permit me to reply through your columns to the query contained in the eulogistic letter of "Veritativa-Veritas," which appeared in your last issue, viz.:—"Can the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd verses of the 4th chapter of the 1st John be fairly quoted as Biblical evidence of authority to attempt communion with spirits?"

To "orthodox" Christians who believe the Bible to be the "Word of God" I maintain that the above verses can not only be quoted as an injunction sanctioning communion with spirits, but as an absolute command of infallible authority to test or try the spirits. Bibliolaters, however, are therein restricted from believing any spirit except those who endorse the narrow religious conceptions entertained by John, who, I may remark, appears to have been as bigoted as the self-admitted dissembler Paul, who pre-eminently evinced that spirit of antichrist which was already in the world in John's day, by his (Paul's) substituting blind faith for deeds of unselfish love, thereby catching some with guile or deceit, and who, although himself a freethinker, denied a similar right to others, declaring that even if an angel from heaven teach any other doctrines than those which he preached, "Let him be accursed." Jesus, on the other hand, is reported to have said, "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"

To rational Christians who do not acknowledge any authority, except that which is borne out by reason or experience, the verses referred to bear no authority, although the injunctions to try the spirits, and to believe not every spirit, are endorsed by them. All religionists, however, for the reasons above stated, are perfectly justified in quoting these verses as authoritative to their "orthodox" brethren, who display great inconsistency in failing to comply with both the direction of John to "try the spirits" and with the dictum of Paul to "desire spiritual gifts," of which he states he would not have them ignorant. John and Paul, however, like many in the present day, were both irrational Spiritualists, notwithstanding the mediumistic gifts which they evidently possessed, if the Bible accounts regarding them are reliable.

For my own part, I fully believe that Jesus came in the flesh, and that He was largely imbued with the christ-principle, but at the same time I hold that every spirit, irrespective of his or her belief, "is of God," "for God is all in all, and we are all His offspring;" the Infinite being the great spiritual Father of all men—good, bad, and indifferent—whether embodied or dis-embodied, whether angelic or devilish.

Yours etc,
HUGH JUNOR BROWNE.

BRISBANE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—Having recovered from my late long and dangerous illness, I feel much pleasure in corresponding with you once more. When I again went forth amongst my friends, the many cordial receptions and hearty shakes of the hand I received showed me I was welcome back again, and that they were glad I had not been removed from their ranks. I take this opportunity of heartily thanking those friends whose acts of kindness helped to raise my spirit above the discomforts caused by physical suffering. During my illness the work of the Psychological Society lapsed, and when I returned to my post as Secretary I found it useless to attempt reviving its former energy, so, with the consent of the committee, wound the affairs of the Society up on the afternoon of the twenty-second of June. The balance-sheet showed a cash balance to credit and no liabilities, the Society thus ending in a satisfactory manner.

This will, no doubt, be the means of the formation of another society on a different basis with more pronounced ideas, and more compatible with the opinions of those of a Spiritualistic or Theosophical tendency.

Something in the physical phase of Spiritualistic manifestations is much required here just now, there being many whom nothing will satisfy but what they can see or feel, and the Nicodemuses of our day must be satisfied as much as the one we read about. Yet there is an abundance of evidence of the Spiritual side of things in the revelations of the clairvoyant and psychometrist. Psychometry, the latest development of clairvoyance, presents a field for investigation of untold extent, a field of research but just commenced, who knows where it will end? It is a study that demands investigating, and calls to the scientist and materialist to come and search this mine of untold wealth or knowledge. To the scientist it opens out a new world, and to the materialist matter for deep thought, and scope to discern a little further than his idea of matter. No one but those who are constantly with the clairvoyant or psychometrist, and therefore have unlimited opportunities to investigate the subject, can give an adequate idea of the seeming impossibilities and astounding revelations that come from them sometimes most unexpectedly and spontaneously. In this age of wonders, one has to be very careful how he ridicules anything new or startling because it seems improbable to him; he may be sorry soon afterwards, for what is but as a dream to-day is a reality and an acknowledged fact tomorrow. Psychometry sounded like a wild imagination not long ago, but now so many startling proofs of its truth take place that we are led to carry our imagination still further, and see in the future that, which were we to tell it to the uninitiated, would seem to them like the idiotic ravings of a lunatic. Being constantly with one of these remarkable mediums in the person of Mrs. S., my sister-in-law, I have quite arrived at the conclusion of its truth, and now each new successful psychometric test but reveals to me deeper mysteries, which I hope to explore as the medium develops. Often has this medium, in my presence, entered spontaneously the clairvoyant condition, and travelled to Sydney, passed through the city, and described events transpiring as accurately as though there in the body. Not only does she appear to see surrounding objects at a great distance, but the senses of smell, touch, and hearing seem just as acute or even more so than were she there in the flesh. On several occasions has she entered a house in Sydney and described minutely what was taking place therein, and even the conversation taking place, which, being taken down on paper at the time, and sent to Sydney, brought us replies in all cases stating every incident to be correct. The other evening when in the psychometric condition, with her eyes tightly closed, and without any pre-arrangement whatever, a photograph was placed in her hand. In a few seconds she said she was passing along a street, which, from the peculiarity of the houses described, we recognised as being in a town in

England where this photograph had come from; she passed along this street until she came to the residence of the persons represented on the photo. After describing the exterior of this house correctly, she passed inside and described the interior in a similar manner. She then saw the persons who were represented on the photo, male and female, and described their appearance accurately, even to a mole on the chin of the female, which cannot be seen on the photo. She afterwards passed into a chemical works adjoining, and described some peculiar machinery which none but those who have visited the works can form any idea of, and a chemical powder that was being manufactured assailed her olfactory nerves to such an extent that she commenced to sneeze, and as she could not stay there left the place at once. A piece of plaster that had fallen from the ceiling of our office was carefully wrapped in paper and placed in her hand; she could not possibly have known what was given her, but she immediately said she was in the office, and that certain persons (naming them) were sitting there talking, which fact was verified later on in the evening. A half sovereign was placed in a book, and she was asked to look and describe what had been placed there. She said she saw something round, that it was a half sovereign, and that the date on it was 1868, which test we had not bargained for, and did not know the number until the book was opened, when we were agreeably surprised to find the date correct, in figures so small that we had to look closely before we could perceive them. The simple, artless, and natural manner in which these descriptions are given, added to the fact that the medium is possessed of but a small degree of intelligence, at once drives away the idea of collusion in any shape or form.

G. S.

SUMMARY OF THE MESSAGE DEPARTMENT

IN the course of the Summary of Materialisation Phenomena published in our last issue, brief reference was made to the large number of communications from old colonists and others who have passed over that have been received through Mr. George Spriggs' mediumship (a small proportion only of which have been published), giving names of persons and places and stating facts correctly, while the medium's strangeness to the Colonies precluded any possibility of any extensive acquaintance with such names and facts. These communications have been received unceasingly week after week from the beginning of March, 1881, up to the present date, Mr. John Carson acting as amanuensis. They are given orally through the medium in the trance-state. The full names and addresses have been given with the greatest minuteness. In cases where the messages have been published, they have frequently been voluntarily verified. In other cases, inquiry by letter or otherwise has also resulted in verification. The messages, however, became so numerous, that it was not only impossible to publish them, but equally so to find the time necessary for their verification. We append a synopsis in tabular form of the communications thus received, furnishing some particulars which will be found interesting:—

Total number of messages, including additional ones from same persons...	140
Number of different persons communicating	90
Known to Mr. Carson by report or more intimately	30
Known to Medium	4
Unknown	56
Published	37
Verified	62
From Colonists	82
viz., Victoria 68; N. S. Wales 9; Queensland 1; S. Australia 1; N. Zealand 1; Tasmania 1; Fiji 1. America 2; Gt. Britain 6.	
Clergymen	5
Doctors	2

MR. MILNER STEPHEN.

CURE OF CANCEROUS TUMOUR IN THE WINDPIPE.

At the public healing held by Mr. Stephen at the Horticultural Hall on July 12th, Mr. Joseph Walters of Stawell, trader, was present, from whom our reporter received the following account of the cure performed on him. About five months ago, he experienced symptoms of relaxed sore throat, which grew worse, and developed into an enlargement of the thyroid gland, surrounding the trachea. The throat became nearly closed up; he had to sit up in bed all the time, and could neither eat nor sleep. He was treated for the complaint by a skilled surgeon (who pronounced it decidedly a cancerous tumour) but without success, the surgeon at last informing him that he could do no more, and that if he had any business matters requiring attention he had better see to them, for it was quite impossible to save his life. Mr. Walters then asked him to meet the Hospital Surgeon in consultation. A meeting was accordingly arranged, a thorough examination made, and the conclusion unanimously arrived at that there was not the least hope. Mr. Walters put the question to them whether there was any surgeon in Melbourne or elsewhere who made that complaint his specialty, and from whom he might receive benefit. They replied, no; that he would get the same answer from them all as they had given him; it would bring him down so low little by little that he would be unable to eject the tumour; that there was no operation in surgery which could be performed with benefit, it being too dangerous, but that if he had any sense of suffocation he was to send for them, and they would open the larynx and put in a tube. He then asked them whether they had ever seen magnetism applied with advantage in these cases. They replied, no; the profession did not look with kindness on these things, but he could try it if he liked; no harm would come of it. Mr. Walters then wrote to Mr. Stephen, who in replying enclosed a certificate from a lady wherein she stated that 19 months before that date she had been cured of a cancer in the spleen, and that she was quite well. Encouraged by this, he came down to Melbourne—though at the time he could scarcely walk, having to be assisted to the railway station, and could not speak above a whisper—and placed himself under Mr. Stephen's treatment. This was continued for three weeks, and consisted simply of regular magnetising passes, laying one hand on the throat, and the other on the cerebellum (which produced a sensation as of pricking in the tumour), placing the tips of the fingers in front of the tumour a few inches off, and the use of magnetised oil and water. No medicine was administered, and no other appliances but a bread poultice at one stage. Passes from centre to circumference were made, which caused a sensation as of strings being drawn through the hard tumour. After three days treatment the tumour softened in one spot, and began to look "angry." The passes then produced the sensation of lancinating pains running through the substance of the tumour. After further magnetising several white pustules appeared through the skin, which became enlarged, and showed signs of running together. The pain was very great, banishing sleep a whole night, but in the morning the pustules were found to be discharging matter freely. This discharge was continued for a day or two, and resulted in a good night's rest, the tumour having much decreased in size. Mr. Stephen then directed strong magnetic currents through the remains of the tumour, producing a tickling sensation, as if affecting the internal growth. The outside formation was now nearly emptied of matter, having from first to last discharged about two table-spoonfuls. The internal formation, however, still rendered breathing difficult when lying down, and the excrescence in the upper portion of the trachea prevented the swallowing of any food but fluids. Mr. Stephen paid special attention to this spot, throwing magnetism to it from the tips of his fingers, but without apparent effect. He then steadied the points of his fingers in front of the spot indicated, and from them

came continuous streams of magnetism that seemed cutting across the throat with a burning sensation. The lump in the throat gradually yielded to this, became less troublesome, and soon after the patient coughed up a small square piece of tumour, which left the throat quite free. The neck began to assume its normal condition. The outside tumour was bathed in warm water, and some of the remaining matter pressed out, which on dropping into the water changed to a fibrous substance, which was thought to be the nucleus of the cancer. Mr. Walters, though a few weeks ago weak and helpless, and given up by his medical attendants, is now well enough to get about to do a day's business. He found that after several applications of magnetism the feet became comfortably warm in bed, instead of requiring the application of hot bricks as usual. He promises to keep us informed of his future progress.

Mr. Stephen treated several cases, including deafness, amaurosis, moonblindness, granulated eyelids, and rheumatism. The patients stated they were benefited, but no complete cures were effected during our stay.

THE MATERIALISATION CIRCLE.

The séance on 27th June was an excellent one. Eleven different forms were materialised, including two new ones. Peter spoke in the direct voice very freely, referring familiarly in conversation with a lady visitor to some English Spiritualists with whom she was acquainted, and answering correctly several questions about them. Geordie in due course presented himself, called for increased light, and pushed the curtain back to show the medium. "The Nun" materialised with distinctness, extended her hand towards the sitters, and placed it against the dark background, so that its shape might be more plainly seen, for comparison with the hand of the medium. "Charity," the Eastern spirit, also materialised strongly, and advanced close to the sitters, extending her hand towards them several times. She also placed it in Mr. Terry's hand, so that he could examine it closely. He stated it to be of a somewhat dark shade of color. A new form manifesting at one of the June sittings gave the name of "Hannah Davies," which, however, was unknown to anyone present. At another sitting the names "Robert Wilson" and "Richard Baxter" of spirits stated to be present were both recognised by visitors. The name "William Black" was also given, and recognised; also another name, recognised as that of the husband of one of the sitters. This spirit friend attempted to show himself in the materialised form, but only partially succeeded, being unable to gain sufficient control over the forces. The form kept sinking down, rising, and again sinking down, as though making strong but fruitless efforts to retain substantially. A letter from a lady at Chiltern addressed to Geordie and Peter was read, and the latter replied, thanking her for her kind expressions towards them, promising that when she had formed a circle they would be pleased to come to her assistance, and (referring to the passing over of a little grandson) telling her that although they might appear to lose him, he would be all right in spirit life.

At the first sitting in July, on the evening of the 4th, the Indian control "Swiftwater" materialised. The face and hands were black. He placed his hand against the light colored wall, the contrast with which brought it out very distinctly. On being requested to do so, he showed his foot, which was also observed to be black. Immediately afterwards Zion materialised strongly, and placing himself in the angle formed by the two walls, drew back both curtains, so that he could be seen with great distinctness bending over the medium. Geordie then presented himself, and sat down in the chair beside Mr. Carson, then rose and advancing to the desk wrote a message. He showed both himself and the medium in a good light, Mr. Terry holding the light in his hand so as to strike directly upon the form. Taking hold of Mr. Terry's hand, Geordie passed the tip of the finger over his teeth, which Mr. Terry stated were perfect. "The Nun" followed, her long black hair being seen very plainly.

On the evening of the 7th Peter conversed with the sitters for some time. He took some flowers which were handed to him, and stood smelling and admiring them, and talking. Geordie then came, and walked about freely, shaking hands with the visitors, then calling for more light, in which he showed himself for a time. A new female form materialised, with long light hair, and of medium height. Writing materials being placed at hand, this spirit-friend wrote a message, in which one of the visitors was addressed by name, after which the form was observed to sink downward, as if losing the power to remain materialised. She was followed by "Charity" and some of the others.

On the 11th Peter and Zion materialised vigorously. The former, referring to the greater or less distinctness of the "direct voice," said that it depended upon the flow of the force between himself and the medium. When he was positive and the medium negative, he drew force from the medium, and the direct voice became strong. When the medium became positive, and the spirit-form negative, the medium drew the force from the spirit-form, and the voice became weaker. Peter explained further that the "direct" voice was outside the medium, and for the time being the spirits materialised their own vocal organs, so as to produce audible sounds, but they were compelled to draw the force from the corresponding portions of the medium's body. In full form materialisation the forces necessary were drawn from corresponding portions of the medium's body. The head—the most sensitive part, and the seat of intelligence—was first materialised, and afterwards the remainder of the body. In dematerialisation the head, as investigators were aware, was the last to disappear, and in rematerialisation the head was again the first to appear, the form rising upwards. The force necessary for materialisation was drawn partly from the circle. While the sitters remained seated, this force was drawn from them in a regular and uniform manner; when a sitter approached close to the medium, there would be a rush of this force, which would sometimes result in pain or inconvenience to either the medium or the control. Geordie then distributed some flowers which had been handed him, and shook hands with the visitors. It was noticed that the hands were cold, the forehead warm. He again sat down by the circle, rose and motioned for increased light, and showed himself with great distinctness, standing with the curtains drawn back, whilst Mr. Terry held the light in his hand as above described. He then wrote a message directed to some of the Sydney friends, and bade the circle adieu, being in a few seconds followed by the tall form of Zion. Mrs. Cobham and "The Nun" followed, John Williams, Lily, and "Charity," who showed her hand and foot, the difference between the latter and that of Geordie being particularly noticeable.

On the 18th Zion stood in the angle of the walls, on the opposite side of the medium to the circle, and drew the curtain well back, so that some of the sitters, more favorably situated, stated that they could perceive the medium's face. Geordie was as active as usual. "Lily" spoke a good deal. Skiawukie spoke in the direct voice, in his "broken-English," informing one of the visitors that his brothers Harry and Charlie, who had passed away when young, were present with him. The names were confirmed as correct. He was a complete stranger to the medium. The tall, erect form of "William Lewis," and the slender form of "The Nun" followed. One of the visitors presented an Egyptian lily to Charity, in allusion to her nationality. She accepted it with graceful bows, turned to the east, raised it above her head, and then stooped and laid it before her, as though making an offering.

On the 18th Peter came first, and conversed for a time. Amongst the visitors, as has happened several times before, was one whom Peter had met in London through another medium, and he recalled several names and incidents which were correct. Zion shewed himself plainly, drew back the curtains, and shook hands vigorously. Geordie was very strong and active. He removed the writing-desk close to the sitters, and stood there for several minutes writing a message. Dr. Rohner, of Benalla, was amongst the visitors present

at this sitting. Geordie approached him and shook hands. Taking the Doctor's hand, he placed it upon his (Geordie's) breast, so that the Doctor could feel the heart beating, also upon the wrist to feel the pulse. Dr. Rohner also felt the tongue and teeth. After showing himself in an increased light, he wrote the following brief message (in allusion to the intended recess),—"Dear Friends,—We shall not be able to see you again for some time; our kind love to you." He then bade the circle a reluctant farewell. He was followed by "The Nun" and "Charity."

Several of the visitors at recent sittings were those who had witnessed the phenomena last year, and express themselves as surprised and pleased at the progress made by the circle in regard to the amount of light, the distinctness of the forms, and the vigour of the manifestations.

The Circle has now adjourned for a month.

REV. JOSEPH COOK ON SPIRITUALISM.

(FROM OUR SYDNEY CORRESPONDENT.)

SOME months ago I learnt through the columns of your paper of the intended visit of the Rev. Joseph Cook to these shores, and I have been on tiptoe of expectation ever since until last Monday evening, when I heard him for the first time. Mr. Cook comes forth under the auspices of the Christian Young Men, and although he does not wish to make money? and is only here on a trip combining the saving of souls with the enjoyment of his own, his lectures are not free pecuniarily or intellectually. If the quality of a lecture was gauged by the entrance fee, Mr. Cook's would stand first upon the list.

It had been noised abroad that he is an adventurer and worshipper at the shrine of Mammon. It had been said by that horribly sacrilegious paper, *The Debater*, that Mr. Cook is a fraud and a sham, that he never condescends to "argue with anyone of a lower social standing than a Duke or a Baronet." But then the Christian Young Men fell down and worshipped him, and he flattered and caressed them—so they said these reports were libellous, scurrilous and false. Then the Christian world applauded, Christian young men cannot lie! Well, I'm not a Christian young man, so you will pardon me if I say hard things but true of this American St. Paul. "Spiritualism and Biblical Demonology" was the title of Monday's lecture. Christianity and Vulgarism was the real subject. In this lecture he sought to show (I cannot say prove) that they are synonymous, that Spiritualism is but a revival or survival of the Necromancy and Demonology of the days gone by. "For 500 years it has ineffectually striven to establish itself," he said, "and will be as far from so doing in all probability 500 years hence." Yet "it is too early in the day to take either the positive or negative position, so I take the hypothetical."

The lecture, which abounded in illogical argument and contradictory statements, extended over two hours, being read from a printed book. He excused himself for so doing upon the plea that he is so often wilfully misrepresented by both the papers and the infidels, that by reading his lecture he made mistake an impossibility.

Spiritualism has arrived at that stage in its development, he acknowledges, when it becomes the duty of certain specially qualified persons to investigate and prove or disprove its alleged phenomena (the special qualification was not given). "But," he adds with great emphasis, "I charge you have nothing to do with seances, mediums, or familiar spirits." "I warn you against all their diabolical and detestable practices." "There is no unity in Spiritualism. I have searched in vain through all its literature for harmony of opinion—I can find none." He admits the communion of spirits (upon Biblical evidence), but claims they are all of demonical origin; that the evidence of evil and licentiousness is predominant and superabundant, the good only sufficiently plentiful to aid the bad. "For if wicked spirits do commune, and I am not prepared to say they do," (first he admits the fact, then calls it into question), "they are able to perform acts which

appear good, where such will tend to their own advantage." "Spiritualism is only productive of insanity," all Spiritualists are rogues, libertines, defaulters, murderers, etc., (statistics stand for nought with the reverend gentleman), and that the best "Spiritualist is the most expert conjuror."

"Because some years ago I signed my name to a paper setting forth the genuineness of certain phenomena that I witnessed, it does not follow that I accepted the Spiritual hypothesis." "I believed and still believe they were the result of Psychic or Nervous force, which are synonymous," (how and when did he discover this) that certain sensitively organised persons possess within themselves this force, which they can use consciously, or in some cases unconsciously. Spiritual manifestations, 'if' (a favorite word of his, also the title of some plagiarised doggerel, given in part at the close of this letter) they do take place are in accordance with natural law." "God alone is supernatural, and He alone can perform a supernatural act." "Any revelation to be of God must be supernatural and must give unmistakable evidence that it is such." Then almost in the next breath he says "Spiritual communications are of a supernatural order." What does he mean? Firstly, he states, Spirit manifestations are natural; secondly, the are supernatural (Christian logic). What is Nature? he asks raising his husky voice to its highest pitch, for he is not a gifted orator. "It does not mean all that is," but only what is created. It is a great error of Huxley's to assert it is otherwise (meekness of spirit). In Nature God is not, (mark this sentence please). A supernatural act is an act above the created, but not above God." "The laws of the Universe may, by the will of God, interfere with the laws of Nature." "All Human beings are part of Nature." Again I ask, what does he mean? If man is part of Nature, and God is not, then man cannot have any of the attributes of God within him. What then becomes of the soul? This looks very much like Materialism, against which Mr. C. thunders with all his powers. Further on, as he progresses with his subject, and gets the thread of his argument hopelessly entangled, he says, "The laws of Nature are immutable, they are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He has already asserted (he never considers it necessary to prove anything), that Spiritual manifestations are the work of the Devil. Yet he brings them forth to substantiate the miracles of the Old Testament, apparently overlooking the fact, by his own showing, that if they are "gay spirits blue and black" to-day, they must have been so in the ages past. It was painfully evident when he passed his opinion upon American Spiritualism that he was not actuated by that Christian philanthropy that teaches us to forgive our enemies, and do unto others as we would be done by. He utterly failed to substantiate one of his assertions. In the words of Fiske, "we find little else but misrepresentation of facts, misconception of principle, and floods of tawdry rhetoric." He is but one of a class of Theological charlatans who trade upon the brains of other men, and dogmatically pass judgment upon subjects they are totally ignorant of. The applause throughout the lecture was very weak, the audience cold and apathetic, while by the narration of his experiences and those of Zollner, who he claims as a personal friend, he has alarmed many of his blindest and most faithful supporters. I need not summarise; what I have said will, I think, be quite sufficient to enable your readers to form some idea of this latest champion in the Christian world, the champion of the religion of Truth, requiring so many lies to bolster it up; the religion of Truth, that says, "Christianity is good, and Spiritualism is bad, because I say so." The religion of Truth, that warns you against science, because "by faith I am saved, by science you are damned." The religion of Truth, whose minister will not save souls under £20, and who moves from a licensed hall to a church because the latter is free, who charges for admission, and advertises "no change given at the doors." The religion of mountebanks, if you will, but not the religion of Truth, while I think I cannot do better than quote the following as a fitting benediction on the Rev. Joseph Cook:—

"It must be confessed that if the gods have made the Rev. Joseph Cook eloquent, they have not bestowed on him to an equal extent, the gift of poetic expression. If that very remarkable sonnet with which he concluded his lecture last night on Spiritualism and Biblical Demonology be a fair sample of his efforts in metrical composition, he would certainly act wisely if he were in future to reserve them for the delectation of his private friends, and in his public utterances confine himself to plain prose. The sonnet in question bears, it appears, the title of "If," and commences in the following startling words:—

Gay spirits black and blue, the tables tip,
A devil's knuckle rap may turn us pale;
It proves there is somewhat behind the veil;
Bap louder fiends.

It would be unfair to deny that there is something of a Shakespearean flavour about these frolicsome demons, recalling, as they do, the black spirits, white spirits, red spirits, and the gray of Macbeth. No one, however, will be likely to think for a moment that the third line quoted has been suggested to Mr. Cook by any poet, either ancient or modern. That "somewhat behind the veil" is too strongly marked by originality to permit of such an assumption. Yet whatever be his shortcomings in other respects in that line, Mr. Cook, in the art of introducing curious and incongruous metaphors may be safely backed against any sonneteer of the day. The forked tails and split hoofs of devils are sliced off by faith with the aid of a microscope, presumably borrowed from science, after which Mr. Cook gives us the cheerful assurance that "Star-eyed faith with lynx-eyed doubt may cope." But he unfortunately winds up with a sort of conundrum to which, at all events, no recognised rule of English grammar will furnish a key. It is pronounced in these terms:—

If split hoofs can be touched, the time has been
When white wings and God's forehead could be seen.

It may be submitted to those who are interested in the solution of riddles, as its meaning is entirely too recondite for the comprehension of ordinary readers. Sound very often in poetic effusions may compensate, at least partially, for the want of sense; but the most ardent admirer of Mr. Cook could hardly say of him what "Denis the Critic" grudgingly admitted of an illustrious contemporary—"That he had got a notable knack of rhyming and writing smooth verse."

BETA.

THE DEBATER.

We have received the first three copies of a new weekly newspaper, bearing the above title, published at Sydney, and edited by E. C. Haviland. The announced object of the paper is to afford a field for the free discussion of all subjects of general interest—political, moral, social, and religious—and so far it has fulfilled its intention, all shades of opinion being well represented.

Amongst other matters, Mr. Joseph Cook comes in for a good share of attention, and a lengthy report of one of his lectures appears in the last issue. The journal, which is a well printed 10-page folio, is published at 3d., and may be obtained at the same price in Melbourne.

We have received a little volume, entitled "Recollections of Twenty Sunday Afternoon Addresses," by John Page Hopps. They appear to be a condensation made up from brief notes of a series of extemporaneous addresses given by that gifted writer and speaker, put together in book form at the solicitation of many of those who heard the lectures delivered. The basis of all of them is simple Christianity, and they are as free from creed or dogma as were the teachings of Jesus; The Spiritual idea runs like a silver thread all through them, being particularly apparent in the last one, entitled, "Earthly Partings: Heavenly Meetings." All these addresses are adapted for elaboration, and would be very useful to amateur speakers on liberal religious platforms as a "neuclei" for lectures.

JOSEPH COOK.

"THE Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U. S. A." has arrived amongst us at last. All hail to the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U. S. A. ! The Churches are greatly in want of him. For a long time past the breakers of heresy have been rushing in upon the religious shores, while Orthodoxy has been at very low ebb; and anything, even a Boston fishing-rod, that might be used to stir the stagnant waters of the theological duck-pond into simulating the semblance of perennial fluxion would be "welcome, truly welcome."

But the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U. S. A., comes not only with "a rod to stir," he is provided also with "a mop to stop" the inflowing surges of Unbelief. Made up of here and there a shred from Dörner and M'Cosh, Lionel Beale and Lotze, Drysdale and Delitsch, all welded together with Cook's incomparable twine of inaccuracy and impudence, bombast and bluster, that mop is warranted to drive the tide of Infidelity back into "empty void."

Mr. Cook's *tout ensemble* is somewhat calculated to impose upon a miscellaneous audience. He is a middle-aged man, of a robust, solid appearance; he has a loud voice, though far from musical, and a decidedly dramatic deportment but which is by no means graceful. He speaks with great fluency and marked emphasis, and impresses you as being quite in earnest. Much cannot be said about Mr. Cook's originality; he culls his flowers from so many foreign fields that there is little room, in his bouquet, for anything of native growth save perhaps a few weeds, but the whole is cleverly bound together with tawdry ribbons and flecked out in showy shades. "Joseph Cook," says the Rev. J. Page Hoppes, "is a sign of the times, and gratifies at once the orthodox appetite for the old theology, the evangelical delight in the old way of salvation, and the modern hunger for a scientific basis; but it is a queer mixture." Well, such as he is, he doubtless has a work to do. Again, hail to the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U. S. A. ! And especially let the Churches say, "Hail!" The ablest, most prominent, and most commanding clerics amongst them are not at all "sound." Bishop Moorhouse, the greatest of these, has gone sadly astray; he has dared to be rational on the subjects of Inspiration, Miracles, and Prayer; he has shared with Canon Farrar an "Eternal Hope" for poor humanity. And it is only meet that the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U. S. A., should come, and in the name of Science, Theology, Philosophy, and Art, prove the Bishop wrong, and lend to the fainting Churches the assurance of his own august intellect that brimstone has after all an everlasting purpose to subserve in the divine economy, and that God really isn't so good as some people try to make out.

Mr. Cook's armour, so his friends say, is complete; he is "equipped at all points to meet assaults upon the faith;" but it must be confessed that the rev. warrior keeps his sword well within its scabbard, or else brandishes it when the foe is far out of sight. Invited again and again, when in England, to debate with Chas. Bradlaugh and others he persistently declined. Challenged, in India, severally by Mr. D. M. Bennett, Col. Olcott, Madame Blavatsky, Pandit Dayanand Saraswati, and the accomplished Editor of the *Philosophic Inquirer*, the Christian champion was always ready with a pitiable excuse.

We shall see what the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U. S. A., has to say to the heretics of Melbourne. X.

The *Psychological Review* for May quotes the salient points in the weighing and measuring experiments detailed in our March report, and concludes,—“The experiments are highly valuable, and appear to have been conducted with extreme care in the Library of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, with no other cabinet than a curtain stretched across the corner of a room, and with a ‘steady light more than sufficient to enable the operation of weighing to be conducted with ease and accuracy.’ Mr. Terry and five other observers sign the record, which is a document of perspicuous clearness, and of real scientific value.”

IMMORTALITY. *

THIS book is a report of a series of Trance Discourses given through the mediumship of Mr. J. J. Morse, at Goswell Hall, London, during the early part of the present year, the first three being devoted specially to the subjects comprehended in the title; the others on miscellaneous subjects. The lectures deal primarily with the questions, "Is there a God?" and "Is there a Future Life?" and although the former is an undemonstrable proposition, the perusal of these discourses brings us nearer to an analogical conviction that the question may be answered in the affirmative. The second question, admitting of sensuous demonstration, is unhesitatingly affirmed by thousands who have proved to their entire satisfaction that their friends still exist in sentient form after the change called death; and it is with these spirit people the controlling intelligence has most particularly to do. In a clear and lucid manner he explains the naturalness of life in the spirit-world and its relationship to earth-life, answering the many puerile objections that have been advanced against an intelligent, semi-material continuity of human life. The section on "Punishments" tends to show that there is in the future life no punishment of a penal nature, but that all suffering is a natural outcome of disharmony, arising from a violation of nature's laws, and necessary to the development of more harmonious conditions; whilst the third part, devoted to the pursuits of spirit people, indicates ample scope for the employment of those faculties of our nature which found a material expression in this world. The tone of these lectures is intensely practical, the arguments logical and well defined; hence they appeal to reason rather than faith, and are, therefore, particularly adapted to the times. The edition which has reached us is a cheap one, the book of 144 pages being published at one shilling.

The following is a quotation from a letter that appeared in a contemporary some years since, and which will be interesting to our readers on account of its reference to Christian Theology:—"When in Florence some years ago I made the acquaintance of Commendatore Negar, who is at present at the head of the Consular departments. He has a magnificent library, including some rare MSS; among these are three letters by Tacitus, written during his Consulate, and apparently addressed to Trojan; one of these I obtained permission to copy as follows.—'It (Christianity) is so utterly opposed to our mutual belief that one or the other must be necessarily wrong. Now the latter is a development of the experience of ages, built up by some of the greatest intellects which Greece and Rome have ever seen, and numbering in its worshippers and priests men of universal reputation, and the other, an emanation from the infatuated brain of a madman, that exists, as so many other delusions do, by imposing on that portion of every community which is at all times open to deception. The proposal of these Christians to be allowed to celebrate their profane rites in the catacombs is amusingly impertinent, and whilst refusing to accede to it, I have not thought it unbecoming to refer the question to you for your ultimate decision.'" E. G.

M.A. (Oxon) in *Light* quotes the principal points in our April report of the Materialisation phenomena, and says,—“As the Intelligences at work familiarise themselves with the circle, and gain confidence, they will probably be able to produce phenomena more perfectly than in the early days when the circle first met,”—and urges the desirability of the manifestations, produced under the best attainable conditions, being attested and fully described—no point being too minute for notice—and published in a pamphlet, thereby conferring a boon on many who are most anxious to have some light on the methods by which this stupendous manifestation of Spirit-power is produced.

* Immortality: its People, Punishments, and Pursuits. Trance lectures, by J. J. Morse, Progressive Literature Agency, London. 1882.

A COMPACT FULFILLED.

TEN years since, I had a bosom friend named James Forbes, a saddler and harness maker by trade. He was a rationalist like myself only having a better education and very likely being otherwise superior, he was more advanced in his ideas. He entertained the idea that there is a continued individual conscious and progressive existence, and through the geological strata progressing upward to the surface on which we stand, he gave a good illustration of the eternity of being. Picking up a smooth pebble one morning as we two were walking together from the bath, he said to me "This pebble is composed of a great number of atoms, a space existing between each atom, although we cannot with our eyes see, each atom revolves in its orbit, as the planets revolve in their orbits, this little pebble represents the universe in miniature." This I at once recognised as the truth; such were the lessons I received from my friend. He next informed me of modern Spiritualism as he read of it in the papers coming from the United States of America. He seemed deeply impressed with the information. I laughed and said, Oh! it is a lot of rot and Yankee humbug, the Yankees are a clever people, we are rid of one humbug and we will not have another imposed on us. One morning these remarks of mine seemed to vex him, and he replied, well, I don't know so much about that! when such men as Judge Edmonds, Professor Hare, and others of equal eminence in literature, and science, some of them ousted from the lofty positions they occupied, and still avowing their knowledge of the Spiritualistic Philosophy, there must be something in it. Well now, my mental soliloquy was this, I may be too fast, these men have very likely greater natural brain capacity than I have, and added to this, their education and sphere in life are vastly superior. I now made answer to my friend, "we will try it," and so we did in my room in Kent Street, and the result was most satisfactory, which greatly astonished and pleased me. My friend and I agreed that which ever of us two departed this mortal-life first, would, if possible, return and let the other know. Well, my friend has gone into Spirit-life about seven years ago. The night and time is vividly impressed upon my memory. I had finished reading the history of Sir William Wallace, and retired to bed. I closed my eyes to sleep, when Forbes was before me, and I knew his mission, opening my eyes the snow-white form was equally clear before me, I then thought thus: Fraser, ideality is highly developed in you, it must be your imagination playing you a trick, it cannot be possible; the form seemed to sweep over me, and and I myself stood upon my feet, and my friend stood facing me, his nose within a few inches of mine, no hat on his head, but otherwise he was dressed as usual, a brightness like the noon-day-sun was around me, I examined him from head to foot, and from foot to head, with my eyes wide open, his blue eyes were clear to my view, I gratefully thanked him for his message of truth to me, exclaiming, it is a positive fact! and he was gone. This was very strange to me, while I stood on my feet in the beautiful light of the Spirit-world, my body lay like a dark mass, or log of wood on the bed, and I cared as little for it. Next morning before my breakfast I went to my friend's residence in Sussex Street, and at my request, I was, by his wife introduced to his bed-chamber, and there lay on the bed his body cold and stiff, and I learned from Mrs. Forbes, that the very time her husband departed this life, he fulfilled his promise to me for which I feel forever grateful. The immortality of the soul being proved, it is to me a very bright knowledge.

A. FRASER.

Sydney, N.S.W., June 12th, 1882.

THE MS. of the concluding portion of "Can It Be" reached us too late for this month's issue; it will appear in our next. "Jottings," "Message Department," "Unitarian Minister's letter," and other contributions, are unavoidably held over.

THE Harbinger for September will contain a full report of one of Mr. Denton's lectures,

MR. WILLIAM DENTON.

THE above talented speaker arrived at Sydney last Saturday evening, and is expected here this evening. After the insertion of advertisement in last issue, a letter was received from Mr. Denton postponing the date of his first lecture for the V. A. S. till August 6th. Those desirous of occupying Dress Circle Seats are particularly requested to secure them before Sunday, as none but seat-holders will be admitted to that part of the house.

THE *Psychological Review* for May contains a review of Rhea Sargent's last and greatest work, "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," by M.A. (Oxon), which will give those who have not read the volume itself a very accurate idea of it. Mr. Frank Podmore's "Realistic Assumptions of Modern Science" referred to in our last critique, are concluded in this number, and are particularly adapted as a corrective to the materialistic dogmatism so prevalent amongst modern scientists. Mrs. de Morgan's "Psychology of Gail" is an instructive paper indicating the connection between Phrenology and Psychology. The chapter of Mrs. Howitt Watts, "Physical Death," which appears in this number, contains some beautiful symbolic lessons, whilst the "Ghostly Visitors" and "Great Kingsbury Puzzle" fully maintain their interest.

Advertisements.

MARRIAGE.

HUG—EDWARDS.—On the 11th July, at the residence of H. J. Browne, Esq., J.P., Park House, Wellington-parade, East Melbourne, by the Rev. J. Caton, Otto Bernardo, third son of the late Signor Melchior Isidore Hug, of Baden, Argovia, Switzerland, to Emily, third daughter of William James Edwards, Esq., of this city.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION
OF
SPIRITUALISTS.WILLIAM DENTON'S
SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES,
Commencing Sunday, 6th August.
AT THE BIJOU THEATRE,
(Late Academy of Music),
With
"THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEATH."

Dress Circle Sitings must be engaged prior to that date, at W. H. TERRY'S 84 Russell Street.

JUST RECEIVED.

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Dr. E. D. Babbitt's Principles of Light and Colour; large 8vo. volume, 576 pages, with numerous beautifully coloured illustrations. 20/.
Health Manual; a most useful book, giving instructions in Magnetism, Diet, and Hygiene. 5/, paper 2s/6
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